

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: A humble request
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 9:22:09 PM

Hello,

Recently the subject of kratom has been in the news. I am an addict in recovery. Opioid addiction stemming from an injury and prescription painkillers I spiraled out of control into addiction. For the first time in 20 years I am absolutely free from all mind altering chemicals. It has been over a year since I have needed heavy painkillers to go about my life. Kratom has proved been a consultant and invaluable source of pain relief... Without this natural herbal supplement my life would be significant impacted in a negative way. I have tried scores of different prescription medications of the course of my life. Kratom has contributed to literally saving my life. I personally would like to implore you to keep kratom legal. It is helping me to stay pain free and absolutely sober. I have never "gotten high" from kratom, and I believe classifying it as an illegal and mind altering drug would be an absolute tragedy and cause untold law abiding citizens to suffer or break the law.

Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Attack on Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 6:07:19 PM

I am a 38 year old, thrice veteran, from (b) (6)
I've been diagnosed with PTSD and I ruptured a disc in my back earlier this year.
I do not drink or take opioid pharmaceuticals (even though I have a prescription).
I do however use Kratom five times a week. This allows me to workout and live a productive life.

I'm not a junkie, I'm not a menace to society.

I don't break the law, but if you ban Kratom I guess I'll start drinking and filling my prescriptions.

Thanks guys, great job doing your research instead of just claiming it's an opioid analogue.

I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

But we know who pays off people like you, ban Kratom and push up sales of prescription opioids, do your real constituency a favor.

Cheers

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Ban on Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 4:25:32 AM

Hello sir,

Why must you guys smear a plant that can save so many lives and help so many people? The claim of 36 deaths over FIVE years is ridiculous even if it was true peanuts kill 100 or more people a year. You guys should know that you are the FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. I want you guys to give up the fight on this Kratom is harmless and has been harmless and so what if there are a few side effects from it. Misinformation on this plant is the real killer not the plant itself. I want you guys to grow up and stop being the pharmaceutical companies pawns. Don't they make enough money selling crap to people they are grasping for straws trying to tighten the grip on the state's they have left now that states are legalizing medical marijuana. You guys aren't doing real research from reap people that use it. And who cares. Over 400,000 people die a year from smoking and we aren't banning it and nicotine is a known neurotoxin. You guys are full of crap that's the only way to put it. Even if it passes it will not last long. People are sick of being sick by the useless drugs pharmaceutical companies guinea pig America on. They rarely ever help anything and you will be lucky not to have 10 other problems needing 10 more medication as a result of taking that one medication. Kratom is not addictive. It is habit forming similar to marijuana. You can't overdose on it if you do take too much you will just throw it up or get a headache and go to sleep. The only thing that needs to happen and I am 100% ok with is making it a crime to sell it to minors, but really is that isn't that important. They have no problem giving a 13 year old antidepressants and mood stabilizers I would know I was one of those 13 year olds whenever I was younger. I have never wanted to take that crap medicine. I am on this earth and this earth provides for me. I'm not staying that all drugs are bad but 90% are just garbage and you guys push them with all their negative side effects. 10 seconds of good side effects and 45 seconds of rapid fire negative side effects and almost always suicidal thoughts or actions. I don't know how the masses have been brainwashed into thinking that is an acceptable side effect for any medication but your not fooling me. This ban just goes to show the kind of power the pharmaceutical companies have over the FDA as long as so many other corporations. And then when sit and scratch our heads wondering why the country is in such bad shape. We have someone checking out committing suicide every couple seconds and what do you do make access to marijuana and kratom illegal and say here take this pill. Well guess what I don't want that pill. I want what God left for me to use. If it grows out of the ground then you guys should have no say so on what I do with it is bull crap. People are waking up. I want this ban shut down and buried. I've watched so many people addicted too opiate prescription pain killers life's change due to kratom. I know people who don't take methadone anymore because of kratom. They have their life's back unlike with methadone they were zombified. The so called opiod epidemic could be cured by kratom so what do you guys decide is best? Ban it? That is absurd. For everyone that is for this ban I hope God shows you what you did wrong by allowing someone close to you to suffer with addiction so maybe you would wish you could take it back. At least we have CNN on our side. The public is becoming wiser to the Lies.. I wouldn't be surprised if a couple bad batches of kratom get put out and really does hurt people just to scare people into believing all of the media hype. I know something will happen like that. Kratom has been here for years as an alternative to opiate pain killers and now that people are waking up to it you want to ban it. Kratom has made me the best person ive been in a very long time. I am not drug addict I just take it for

social anxiety and depression and it works wonders for me. I would really hate for this to go away. 7 months ago I wouldn't have cared that much but lately I have been seeing my life and the lives of many others changing for the better.

Please don't ban this incredible plant. This should be a choice for adults to make. We should put laws in place to make it a crime to sell to minors but that's all we need. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this plant. Stop over exaggerating the side effects and lying. It makes the government look even more foolish. It's already a joke that the UNITED states can't UNITE on marijuana. I wonder what other countries must think about how we can't ever agree on anything and call ourselves the land of the free but put more people in prison than any other country and for plants of all things. Did you guys run out of stuff to do at the FDA and decided to pick a fight with kratom because the powers that be (pharmaceutical companies) paid for your vacation this year or what? What about me my best friend died last year from a pain pill addiction if i would had known about this we could still be hanging out going hiking together. This is shameful what you all are doing. I hope that you never have to loose someone to a real opiate ADDICTION. Kratom is just more of a HABIT. You could not take it but hell why not it feels good and it's cheap. And I feel no pain no anxiety no depression. What's the real problem then? There isn't one but I'm sure you guys will fabricate something very convincing.

Sorry if i seem agitated because I am. This is ridiculous and you all know it. Leave kratom alone before more people die from opiate addiction. This can save not hurt. I promise you that a person who us a drug addict will not use kratom unless they truly want to get clean. Taking large doses just isn't that fun. After a certain Amount you will just throw it up. It has a built in limit. Please I beg you leave this decision up to responsible hard working adults who deserve to have something cheap for pain relief. Go to a kava bar and get a cup of kratom and see for yourself it's not what they keep hyping it up to be.

Thanks

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Bullshit
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 1:22:03 PM

This war on a natural plant that has not hurt anyone is stupid. Kratom alone has not killed anyone unlike your opioids. Kratom has helped millions stay off stuff like that. Your big pharma would rather get people hooked on subutex or something to get people off, but then they become addicted to it. There is not one harmful thing about kratom it's all about you and big pharma losing money. Fucking ass holes. I hope you like the fact you're going to have more people OD on opioids if you ban it.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Concerns about Herbal Supplement-Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 11:29:35 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

I am writing this letter in regards to my total disagreement with the FDA and your recent smear campaign against an herbal supplement called Kratom. I am not sure why you feel its in your best interest to take this all natural supplement away from hard working, tax paying Americans who should have the right to choose what we decide is beneficial for us.

My name is (b) (6), I am 57 years old and served my country for 8 years in the US Army. I am completely troubled why our government is slowly taking everything away from us, this means our rights as a US Citizen.

Everyday the government is taking little pieces of our freedom and forcing us to live the way our government feels we should live. How dare you tell me what I can or cannot do? I am a good person, I work, I have a family, I go to church and I pay taxes. I am not a liar, cheat, murderer, drug user, I am an AMERICAN and deserve to be treated as one! Did you know that 90% of all the people who utilize this herb have done nothing wrong if its working why take it away from us?

Why is this all natural supplement a problem for the FDA? Why I ask, when there are so many other problems with our government! Lets talk about Pharmaceuticals! These same drugs you approve are killing innocent Americans everyday and the FDA just sits by and does nothing but yet you want to ban Kratom. Why???? I do not see the justice here at all.

I beg you to reconsider your claims! The world will be a sad place once you see what will happen if this goes through. You will ultimately be responsible for millions of deaths that will definitely happen if you take this away from us! I promise the Opiate epidemic will only get worse and then what will the FDA do then?

I have my life back due to Kratom, and I will never go back to how I was living in pain.
Please don't take this away from ME!

Thank you for your time.

Regards

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Cc: (b) (5)
Subject: DO NOT BAN KRATOM!
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 8:25:44 AM

Dear Mr. Commissioner,

I am writing to respectfully request that you do not ban Kratom. It would be extremely unfair to the thousands, if not millions of people, who have found the answer to ending their opiod addictions, to controlling their pain, and to minimizing the devastating symptoms of their chronic illnesses. There are thousands of amazing testimonials out on the internet. Thousands! The medical science, if you were to take the time to study it, **IS PROOF** that Kratom is a safe and effective natural option for people in chronic pain and with chronic illnesses.

Opioids kill thousands of people each year. Kratom **DOES NOT** kill. The FDA erroneously sites to 13 or 14 people who died from Kratom. This information which the FDA is wrongfully declaring to the public **is inaccurate, skewed and completely misleading**. Those individuals had other drugs in their system and suffered from serious medical conditions that contributed to their deaths. You can **twist the facts** any way you want to convince the public that Kratom is dangerous. But are you doing the public true and honest justice? The answer is **NO**.

If you are going to ban Kratom, which has killed **NO ONE**, then you need to ban Alcohol which has killed millions! You need to ban Guarana! You need to ban any products containing Caffeine! You need to ban Methadone which has killed thousands! You need to ban Suboxone which has killed thousands. You need to ban Oxycodone, Oxycontin, Percocet, Gabapentin, and all of the other known related brand and generic named medications, which have killed thousands!

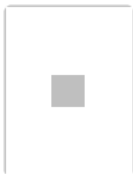
Government bureaucracy and lobbying pressures should never take priority over **saving peoples lives**! Is that really the FDA's purpose? For the FDA to essentially end up allowing access to the public of the many products/medications that have killed thousands, if not millions of people... **and which will ultimately kill even more people**..... BUT to ban a natural safe miraculous plant that can save people's lives and has not killed anyone... **IS IN AND OF ITSELF MURDER!** Is that what the FDA's intention is??????

THAT IS YOUR REALITY, MR. COMMISSIONER.

DO NOT BAN KRATOM! BE FAIR. LISTEN TO THE SCIENCE. LISTEN TO THE HONEST FACTUAL TRUTHS. LISTEN TO THE THOUSANDS OF TESTIMONIES. DO NOT HARM PEOPLE BY BANNING A SAFE

**AND NATURAL PLANT THAT HAS SAVED THOUSANDS OF LIVES.
THAT IS YOUR REALITY.**

Very respectfully,



(b) (6)

[Website](#)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Do NOT ban Kratom. Kratom saves lives!
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017 10:25:43 AM

Dear Mr. Commissioner,

We all are aware that you've received nearly half a million dollars from Glaxo Smith Kline and are likely motivated to do this ridiculous ban to fill your pockets.

Dr. Henningfield world renowned addiction specialist who has worked with DEA concluded kratom is safe and effective. https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9ba5da_5a326244df824bc984121783fdc4a65c.pdf

FDA/DEA Claims no studies or medical benefits to kratom but here are 175+ studies, journals, and press releases on its use and efficacy [Medical error 3rd leading cause of death in US. 2400 deaths per week from side effects of rx drugs. Deaths proven to be a result of kratom alone](https://drive.google.com/drive/mobile/folders/>(b) (6)</p></div><div data-bbox=)

=0. <http://216.30.191.148/BabinAnalysisofTwoDeathsReportedlyAssociatedwithKratomUseFINAL2.pdf>

Kratom saves lives and improves the quality of life for millions of people. You would be forcing patients back onto highly addictive opiate prescriptions and furthering the heroin epidemic. We will not stop until the entire public is fully aware of not only your connections to the pharmaceutical companies but also educating the general public of the factual information. To proceed with such a ban is dangerous and cruel. I don't know how you can sleep at night.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA Kratom Ban
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:34:52 PM

Sir,

My name is (b) (6). I am a 34 year old PCO (Pest Control Operator) and a responsible adult. Before I found kratom I suffered from depression, and back and shoulder pain from a car accident. I spent a long period of time on several different antidepressants for the depression and I didn't find any consistent long term relief from the anxiety and negative thinking that accompanies depression. I also became addicted to prescription pain killers and eventually developed a drug habit that held me back in my personal and professional life.

I found kratom a little over six years ago and made it my mission to get off the prescription drugs and gain some clarity and strive for success finally. I credit kratom for helping me get my body and mind into a healthy state. I take a steady dose, and my lab results show that I am healthy even though I have taken kratom for years straight. In the intervening time I went from working for poverty wages at dead end jobs, to being a successful man making \$75k a year and moving up the chain within my company.

I have been forced to quit once already in the last year when your friends at the DEA attempted to push through the exact same legislation for very weak and overblown reasons. It's not a difficult process to withdrawal from kratom, but it is spectacularly unfair for you to intrude into my personal life and attempt to dictate what I do when I am NOT hurting anyone, including myself.

You know very well that by pushing kratom into the black market you are going to create an incredible amount of "criminals" who have up to this point been respectable citizens, quietly going about their normal lives. Black markets will spring up and people really will get hurt, whereas before your intent to ban kratom it was a legitimate market, where we wanted our suppliers to submit batch analysis and bad actors lost to reputable suppliers.

You already know the science behind partial opioid receptor agonists and the safety profile of the bulk plant material and the two main active chemical compounds in kratom, so I can only assume you will potentially gain something from your actions. I don't mean to accuse or sound conspiratorial, but considering how few people are hurt vs helped by kratom I have to assume you have an ulterior motive. Tylenol hurts 1000x as many people every year.

I am a law abiding and patriotic citizen, so I will comply with any laws enacted. But if you betray us, as it seems you are going to, I will join with all the other interested parties and we will make it a politically difficult situation for the FDA. The DEA astonished and impressed me last year, by actually listening to us and treating us like our voices were heard and respected.

Please reconsider your actions, and you will find people will rally to support any efforts that can actually improve the safety and quality of the raw material we ingest. Creating a black market is not the way to do that.

Thank you for your time

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: How Kratom Changed My Life
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 3:59:29 AM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing this to ask you to please reconsider the use of kratom or any other natural plants for personal use.

How can any person or agency tell someone that they can't practice their God given right to use plants that was put here by him.

By personal experiences of people from around the world for thousands of years, studies done by Doctors and scientist there has been hardly any negative effects of taking Kratom by itself. There is prescription medications that have side effects so severe that it is far worse than what it was prescribed to treat. There is far more deaths related to prescription medications, including opiates that our country is battling but yet they are still legal and being prescribed recklessly. Do you even feel that this is right? To let doctors prescribe medication that is killing so many people but condemn a natural plant that is related to coffee, one that is helping so many people. I truly believe you and your agency could care less as long as you are getting paid.

I have personal experience with Kratom. I have severe social anxiety with depression along with several herniated discs in my neck. I was on opiates, benzos and antidepressants for years. It ruined my life, I didn't even feel like I was me. I became addicted to my meds which caused a divorce, lost my job, couldn't see my children. I had to change for my children's sake, I didn't want to be a deadbeat dad addicted to drugs. I wanted to find a natural way to get my life back without all of the negative side effects of those horrible medications. That's when I read about Kratom. I have been taking it for almost 5 years and the difference is night and day. I haven't had anxiety or depression since. And as for my herniated disc, I rarely even have to take a Tylenol. But I know this is not what pharmaceutical companies don't want to hear. It hurts their pockets. We Americans are aware of the main objectives of such companies and affiliates.

I doubt that you will actually read all of this, if at all. But I thought I would voice my feelings. You know if Marijuana can be legal why can't a herb like kratom be too.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: How Kratom helped me
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 8:22:51 PM

Respectfully asking for the attention of the FDA and Scott Gottlieb M.D.,

My story is typical because I have dealt with chronic pain and fatigue for over 20 years. I am now just another 55 year old American needing disability because of fibromyalgia and adrenal issues.

But several months ago at my wits end from loosing so much of my life and the pain for some reason was really peaking, I try everything in my power and imagination to get well again and return to my previously successful career as a stage lighting designer. I have avoided getting opioid prescriptions and have for several years been just using medicine that give me low levels of support but knowing they don't have the stigma that opioids have with our society.

As I said several months ago my symptoms had become almost unbearable (that's deaths door type levels of pain and misery.

So instead of going back to the pain management I was so fortune to be reminded about Kratom while reading in a few different chronic pain groups on the Internet. There were dozens and dozens of success stories of others getting safe reliable relief.

I then did some research to again learn more about Kratom as a natural supplemental approach and on good places to purchase it. I went on to order from three different distributors and all of them supplied me with safe well packaged Kratom relief. It was as instant and best relief of any comparable prescription medications I have had. It's amazing and I had taken everything including super high does of the strongest opioids. I had never tried or even thought of the illegal forms of opioids and heroine that are available to me now for treating my pain but to be honest I couldn't help at that point to think about it for help. Now I worry if Kratom is taken away I might have go to that extreme. That is just a nightmare to even think of that replacing the relief of Kratom while it's safe and legally accessible. My doctor was happy to hear of my relief from Kratom and has agreed to help make sure there are no drawbacks to Kratom use. Instead of concern they were actually thinking of possibilities with Kratom for their own loved ones.

Kratom has worked wonders in my life already even getting me back to work and hopefully off government disability one day soon.

Kratom has begun to replace all of my prescription medications and it has none of the side effects and toxic nature of those medicines. I have at least been able so far to cut dosages in half and cut out a few completely.

Kratom has been amazing and a miracle for me. It has had almost zero side effects and all benefits.

Please stop these motions and ask us, look at the science and allow more research. I respectfully am asking you to follow the will of the overwhelming majority of voting American citizens and help keep Kratom legal.

Please keep Kratom safe and available to all of us who benefit from this plant and are able to avoid contributing to the Opioid epidemic. We will not ask for the opioids legal or worse off the street if we can just maintain access to Kratom.

Respectful but disheartened at the moment in the fact that my government may NOT be looking out for my best interest and instead makes me very concerned about who the FDA's allegiance IS with.

Please make your allegiance to us the Americans citizens who benefit and even at times need this wonder plant that God has provided us.

In closing I learned a great deal from this organization and support their efforts. Please visit with them to learn more about all of stories.

<https://www.americkratom.org/>

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Available
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:10:10 PM

Dear Commissioner **Gottlieb**,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a married 43 year-old man. I reside in (b) (6) and have been teaching elementary school for the last 17 years for the same school district. I have owned a home since 2009.

I am a proud and hard-working American who has faith in our country, if not its leadership. I am speaking out to protect my right to access the things that I need to live a more healthy and healthful lifestyle. I am appalled by the FDA's attempt to demonize the botanical known as Kratom. The misinformation about this plant that is being propagated throughout the mainstream media by the FDA (and the DEA) must stop as science has not proven anything of what you are verifying as fact. This "smear campaign" must end immediately. American people are intelligent enough to decide what kinds of plants they want to ingest without the input of the government.

I have been drinking the dietary supplement, Kratom, since 2008. A friend of mine introduced it to me as an herbal tea that would help lift my mood and bring on a sense of well-being. I began drinking Kratom tea in the evenings, as one would drink any herbal tea, 3 to 4 times per week. I began to notice an overall uplift in my day to day attitude and happiness.

Kratom has helped me keep a calm perspective in an, often, hectic world, and for that I am grateful. Please keep Kratom available to the American people, as it has been used safely for many years in this country, and for thousands of years throughout the world.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 9:02:30 AM

I have been taking kratom for the past 6 years as an alternative to painkillers ,I have seen the misinformation about this wonderful plant and it makes me sick to my stomach,it is unjustified and a flat out lie what they are claiming,the truth us,it's helping people in pain ,and it is cutting into your pharmaceutical business where you make your money at and you don't like that,and insist on shoving dangerous narcotic drugs down our throats instead,because that is where the money is at. I did my own research and peanuts have killed more people due to allergies or choking than what your false claims on kratom have,so are we going to go after peanuts next? How about oxycontin ,or Vicodin? How many deaths have happened due to those being shoved d oen people's throats..more and more this country and the crooked government amaze me and its clear you don't care about us and the bottom line is the almighty dollar.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep your hands off my kratom!
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 3:31:57 PM

Commissioner,

I'm writing you to voice my support for kratom (*mitragyna speciosa*) and my vehement disagreement with the FDA and its recent (and ongoing) smear campaign against it.

The way that you and your agency are falsely portraying kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions, and that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, puts this useful plant on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin—which is ridiculous.

Myself and several members of my family use kratom fairly regularly (in place of coffee) to not only get us going in the morning but also to naturally keep in check pain and other symptoms from which we suffer. My mom currently has cancer and kratom helps her tremendously—without causing any harmful side effects and with no addictive properties, I might add.

Your crusade to schedule kratom has the potential to harm millions of good people like us who use it safely and effectively for our well-being, helping us to avoid using harmful medications that come with serious side effects and risk of death! What you're trying to do will also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Personally, I suffer from chronic gastrointestinal problems for which kratom seems to be the only natural option that works. I'm able to get all of my work done every day without having to take naps from chronic fatigue. I'm also able to eat more and live a healthy and more functional life. Do you want to harm people like me? Because that's what you're doing with your misinformation campaign against kratom.

Maybe you want to prove me and many others wrong in concluding that the FDA only works on behalf of the pharmaceutical companies and never in the interests of the people. You have that option right now, and can make the choice to abandon this evil campaign of lies and stop trying to take away our freedom to use plants!

Kratom really is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life (and many other people's lives). I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Sincerely,

(b) (6) from (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 1:35:42 PM

I am A kratom user I have some things that I'd like to say, and because of my respect for kratom, I'll keep my comments respectful to you. Not for you: because personally I feel that you have disgraced your professional position.

So in order to keep my emotions out of this, I will just add what I have written:

That there's absolutely no high, no clouded judgements, and no purple polka dotted people eaters. When you use kratom.

In all seriousness my doctors have been telling me that this (not the kratom), is going to kill me. I've had 30+ seizures a day the last 3 days and was told "its to be expected."

You've taken away my meds, put me into withdrawals without a thought of what it would be like. I'm not a slacker, I am an educated person. I used to be extremely active, had plans & goals for my life.

I had a cast put on too tight: it cut off the circulation, killed the nerves. My leg was allowed to remain too long, the nerve damage spread to full body, its now documented to be in my brain.

It's shutting down my organs one by one and will eventually kill me. I've had gangrene, pulmonary embolisms, 9 bouts of osteomyelitis and much more.

I have such brittle bones because of the nerve damage that I have 9 broken/ compression fractured vertebrae, a artificial hip, my other hip and knee need to be replaced. Im not even going to go into the amputations.

Not one aspect has been positively effected Every person in my life has been negatively affected by what I deal with every second of every minute, every hour of each day /week / month / year since I was 16; I am now 54.

You actually did kind of do me a favor- helping me find other methods of relief using your false opioid prescription action.

Until now.

This damage is going to kill me, I've been on deaths door far too many times to count.

Now due to your " new guidelines " I don't fit into your terminal cancer pigeon hole.

But I go and find something natural, that lets me have a clear head. It helps with pain, a general overall wellness without any high.

I am able to get myself out of bed, [for the past 10 years I've been stuck there], I can get into my wheelchair and go to the front room. I've been smiling, and trying to find a hobby or something; I have a desire instead of arguing with doctors about quality of life/vs no quality of life.

I take 1 1/2 tsp a day of kratom. Not all at once.

No, it doesn't get rid of all of the pain, but I can tolerate it!

Now, because big pharmaceutical co's are backing the ban- you are going to take away a life I've been able to appreciate since April.

I'm wondering how long it's going to be before you are willing to be paid to look the other way while " us trouble makers responsible for the opioid crisis anyway" are just done away with altogether.

There's not one valid certification of death that kratom (alone) is responsible for, and you know this!

We've seen the suicide rates rise since people have had their medications stopped. Each day more and more people are finding themselves in that place of no medications -Cold turkey, no warning, just stopped.

I had lost all hope.

I had made a plan and was just going to put it in action.

THEN someone told me about Kratom

I figured why not at least listen.

I didn't want to die.

Then i started kratom.

I found hope.

I found laughter

I discovered this mystical " quality of life."

Now you want to take it away, so a billion dollar industry can put more billions in all of your pockets....

At the cost of how many lives???? Really?

Is it worth It?

You don't have to worry about not being able to function.

To sleep.

To eat.

To just live, find some semblance of a life.

To laugh.

Smile.

Can you even contemplate what that's like?

Yes I still have pain, and complications. I know my ending- but I'm ok with that now. I have been able to find peace with it. So I can enjoy what I have left, vs trying to say everything I want to say and making people miserable.

And you want to rip that out of our lives....

Why don't you do an experiment: for 1 month.. Just 1.

Put yourself in a wheelchair, tie your legs together so you can't use them. Get up, get dressed, fix your food, go to work (no servers, nobody to help you), get by on \$876. a month.

Use busses. Pharmacy to pharmacy, doctors -pay copays, rent.. that kind of thing, while in so much pain, you have to remember to breathe - by yourself; you are just as tired of talking about the pain, "what now" as everyone is hearing about it. 30 days - Not a lifetime, like we are subjected to.

Do you remember that oath you took?

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 6:25:35 PM

Dear Commissioner of the FDA,

My name is (b) (6). I am a 36 year old living in (b) (6) and I have suffered from chronic back pain for over 5 years. I've been to many doctors, chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists, shamans, Reiki masters, craniosacral therapists, and many more and yet my pain lingers on.

Nothing has helped me more than Kratom. In small responsible doses it gives me the energy and cuts down my pain to a level that allows me to not only function but excel at my work as a massage therapist. Neither prescription pain killers nor medical marijuana can help me the way Kratom has because they only offer pain relief at the sacrifice of mental clarity.

I have been taking Kratom for close to 2 years now as needed. Some days, I don't take it at all and find it way less addicting than coffee.

The amount of people in our communities that are struggling with addictions to painkillers and over dose daily would be greatly reduced if the FDA would look at the medicinal benefits to this supplement instead of trying to make it illegal. As a country we need to start looking at what is best for the health of the people and not only what is best for the pocket books of big pharma. Hundreds of thousands of lives are lost to abuse of prescription drugs ever year. Should you take Kratom off the market, this number is going to go up, not down. That blood will be on your hands.

In Asia, Kratom is used to help get people off of opiates and even heroin. It is natural and the only side effects known are dehydration, which is an easy remedied by drinking extra water, and much shorter than all the side effects on any prescription bottle I have ever seen.

Please reconsider this war on another harmless plant and do what is right for the American people, especially those who suffer from chronic pain. There are a lot of Veterans who are in daily pain from injuries acquired fighting for our freedom, and this would be a slap in the face to many of them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:55:51 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 26 year old martial arts teacher from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign.
This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I use kratom regularly for pain management.
I used to be very active in weightlifting and now am in a continuous campaign to cure my constant migraines with PRI practice along with exercise to fix my left rotator cuff and rolled shoulders.
The FDA approved of opiate based drugs that nearly ruined my health and life.
So my trust and solidarity with what the FDA approve's of is limited at best.
Many other counties focus more so on natural herbs and medicines rather than synthetic drugs.
If this attack on kratom is due to it taking away your income (which is what most people are claiming)
Might I suggest a sin tax on kratom just as is done for alcohol and tobacco products.
This war on drugs is a war on people.
I take kratom regularly like I said and the most that could possibly happen negatively is nausea.
You cannot die from kratom and it does not effect your health in a negative manner.
So I suggest a sin tax that is sent to the FDA.
Because taking this organic plant away will only cause more problems I assure you.
This will also damage your reputation even further to the point where people will not trust you and your authority meaning nothing will be an eventuality.
So many of us beg you to reconsider your campaign.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:55:50 AM

Dear Mr. Director,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

I have used it to relieve periodic sleep problems and pain management issues that no other drug or substance can do as safely and effectively as Kratom.

Without being able to get it legally commercially people like me will have to turn to the Black Market and get it. Get it we will regardless of what it is you do. So why go down that path? Create yet another uncontrolled "Black" market for a substance that has been proven to be effective in helping many folks. Look at the latest results with cannabis and marijuana. They are turning out to be wonderful compounds to manage many things medical science has no answer for. It makes no sense to classify Kratom as illegal or a controlled substance at this point.

I do vote and do support political candidates and their appointees that help the American People. You will be held accountable for your actions and that is a promise, not a threat.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 5:57:45 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm 42yrs old and from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I began using Kratom as an all-natural alternative to opiod medication my doctors wanted to put me on due to my severe back injury.

I been through surgeries and I did not want to continue down the Opiod road until they no longer work for me when I will really need them in the future. My body started becoming resistant to them and I said enough was enough. I started using Kratom in very small doses and still do- and it works just as well as high levels of Percocet and Oxyconton. I can now absolutely function and be of sound mind to be a supportive member of society- rather than a drueling idiot on the couch staring at a wall. My kids are the most important people to me and to be a full-time working mom with a bright future without excruciating pain is a miracle. I want to be someone they are proud of

-What kratom means to you (has it given you your life back, have you gone back to work, can you play with your, exercise or travel, etc., something anecdotal about why kratom is important and should be available).

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. The FDA is one of most corrupt agencies in behalf of the pharmaceutical companies so please research this before making a decision that will affect millions of people trying to find a better way.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:25:13 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

I feel like this attack is once again for the wrong reasons which have nothing to do with the safety of our citizens. The facts clearly point in the direction of special interest who don't really care about people as much as they do about profit. Sickening how our government operates anymore.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)
Kratom user for four years who has stopped using a handful of pills everyday thanks to this supplement.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:59:13 PM

I am dismayed by the fda's recent attacks on this wonderful herb that has effectively and safely allowed me to deal with my addiction. I am a drug addict, I use everything with a high abuse potential compulsively, recklessly, and without restraint. I am 26 years old, and I have been to rehab at least five time, I have overdosed on heroin/fentanyl three times, I have been diagnosed with the fatal, untreatable disease of alcoholism that neither God nor modern medicine has been able to treat.

Six months ago, having exhausted all of the approved medical and spiritual options, I came across an obscure Asian herb that effectively changed my life. I had little hope of its success and skepticism regarding its safety, but having literally nothing else to lose, I obtained the herb in a leap of blind desperation.

Would I end up reaching an all time low through its consumption? Would I compulsively use it like every other psychoactive chemical I've encountered? Was I-in a sense-jumping out of the pan into the fire?

The answer, to my surprise, is no. For the first time in my life, I am in control. The cravings are gone, my pocketbook is in tact. My family is finally proud of me and my employer is as well. After years of drifting through life as an empty shadow of a man-I am finally alive. I can finally breathe.

Mr.Commissioner, why are you trying to kill me? Why do you want me to die?

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 2:17:38 PM

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to express my extreme dismay and concern over the possibility that the natural plant Kratom is being considered by the FDA for banning, as a dangerous drug of addiction. As a mother of three, I am willing to offer my personal testimony to kratom, and how it has improved my life. Let me explain some of the actions and known effects of Kratom (*Mitragyna Speciosa*):

- Kratom is a tree native to Southeast Asia, whose leaves have been used as a natural medicine for thousands of years.
- In small doses it provides an energy boost – it's a botanical cousin of coffee, but in higher doses have a sedative and analgesic (*pain relieving*) effect
- Its main use is as an effective natural pain reliever and anti-depressant
- Thousands of testimonials have been written about kratom's efficacy in treating:
-chronic pain, diabetes, fatigue, depression, lack of energy, withdrawal symptoms of opiate and alcohol addiction
- Kratom is **non-addictive**, and has **few side effects**
- Users report that it is “less addictive than coffee”, with those in middle-age being the most frequent and enthusiastic proponents of kratom's benefits.

Despite all these wonderful effects, this plant is in danger of being banned in the US by the Drug Enforcement Administration and FDA. **Ironically their reason for banning this wonderfully safe medicine is that it poses a ‘health risk’.** Kratom is used recreationally by some people, and recent scares surrounding the synthetic drug 'bath-salts' have led to increased scrutiny on a number of legal substances and plants. This age-old medicine is being lumped in with dangerous, unknown synthetic substances, and is under threat of criminalization. If this criminalization occurs, countless sufferers of illness and pain could lose access to a vital natural remedy that they have been using safely for years. Like any plant or medicine, when one regularly ingests excessive amounts of a substance there is a potential for harm. This is true of countless products available for sale in pharmacies and liquor stores today, but few would argue that this means they should be outlawed. If kratom is abused – taken daily in very high doses – it can be mildly addictive, and can also cause “nervousness, sleeplessness, loss of libido, constipation and the darkening of skin complexion”. However, there have been no recorded deaths due to the use of kratom alone,

which highlights its safety.

A case can certainly be made for the restriction of sale of kratom to minors, and responsible vendors have called for self-policing and an industry code of conduct. Senator A.G. Crowe withdrew a proposal to outlaw the sale of kratom in Louisiana after hundreds of people signed a petition against the plan, however he plans to put forward legislation to instate a minimum age of 18 for anybody purchasing the leaf – a move that is presumably not opposed by the majority of those who responsibly use kratom. We have seen time and time again that prohibition simply worsens the social impact of drug use, causing further health risks for users and providing criminal gangs with money that could instead be directed towards tax coffers.

Public health should be not seen through a lens so narrow that it that disregards practically all alternatives to Western medicine and pharmaceutical drugs. We call upon citizens, policymakers, and politicians to support the reform of archaic drug policy for the benefit of society, and to respect people's innate right to use all natural plants and herbs.

Thank you for your time and my prayer is that you help join the fight to regulate not prohibit the use of this natural herbal medicine.

(b) (6)

(34 year old Mother of Three, (b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 2:44:51 PM

My name is (b) (6)

I have been using kratom for 5 years, and it has helped me with my headaches and depression, and is a much safer alternative than opioids. It has benefitted me greatly and I adamantly believe the FDA should reconsider banning this wonderful herb. Kratom is a natural herb, put here by God, and you have no right to take it away from millions of users. All the negative stories are lies.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 8:02:26 PM

It's sad to hear your corporation is planning a smear campaign on more plant medicine. The government has lied on many things, kratom helps more Americans it is helping me for I have been perscribed close to every psychological "medication" from Drs who "practice" medicine and have had more cellular, genetic, and mental damage from FDA approved medication then I ever have from kratom or marijuana. Currently I only take kratom for my anxiety disorder, adhd, and overwhelming uncomfortability which leaves me unable to work, function, or sustain a healthy lifestyle. To date I do not know of any deaths due to kratom use, however if one drinks too much water they run the risk of death, henceforth alcohol which is legal and being the leading substance abused has and will continue to destroy, kill, and maim families and individuals. Taking the choice from an individual is not only unconstitutional, it's inhumane, wrong and evil. Iam certain that if government corporations continue to enforce unjust, delusional, dishonest regulations upon others that it will further lead us all down a very dark path, no man has the right, or enough knowledge or understanding to make another choice for them, I truly hope you reconsider your decision on attacking kratom and the community of those who use this plant for multiple reasons, some have used this to get clean from horrific drugs like heroin, not needing to use suboxen nor methadone, two other drugs that had worse ramifications upon my body then kratom ever has or ever will. A smart man said once, The path to hell is paved with good intentions. I am fully aware of the intelligence levels of those in service to your company and agenda, know this that when one head of a hydra is cut off two grow in it's place, this can have horrible consequences and will result in many countless lives lost for those unable to adjust not having the medicine keeping them off of heroin which is a plague upon our country. I stopped the use of kratom for six days this past week after one year of use, the withdrawal from this was not nearly as hard as detoxing from suboxen, heroin, or methadone. Clearly the FDA, the government, corporations of the world are run by those who crave control, hurting and not helping there fellow human family members, we will see your reply in your actions and I will leave judgement in God's hands for iam only his son. I hope and pray you are for helping others and able to hear us without delusional beliefs, this reminds me of the campaign against weed and the amusing smearing of a natural plant that has holistic properties. The unnatural pharماسuitical medications that are far worse need to have FDA revocation, I wonder truly if the poisoning of Americans through FDA approved products is a planned depopulation project or if you people truly believe what your doing is right or even positive. We have heavy opposition towards the removal of kratom and heavier opposition towards controlling individual freedom of choice. Thank you for your time and may we all be judged accordingly by the most high God. My name is (b) (6) and we are the resistance.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 4:51:24 PM

I strongly disagree with your recent ruling on Kratom. I honestly feel like you are lying to people. I know from experience that this is a safe plant and poses no threat to the public. Millions of people use this plant on a daily basis, for many reasons, with no negative effects. To say that it is a killer is a blayent lie. Myself and I am sure millions like me will contact our government officials to make sure they know that what you have stated is a total lie.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 1:35:51 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 33 year old man from (b) (6) .

I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I first started using kratom when I tore my meniscus from a bike accident. As a former heroin addict I was not interested in using my hydrocodone prescription because I knew I was going to be out from work for months and I would need to take it every day. Dependence on the hydrocodone would likely be inevitable so I looked for a safer and less addictive alternative. I heard about kratom and tried it on one occasion in the past, so I figured I would give it a shot. I took the hydrocodone once or twice and it only gave me about 2-3 hours of pain relief. The kratom gave me 6-8 hours of pain relief. It also didn't give me any side effects. I used that for a while then stopped upon my recovery from the injurt. I rediscovered kratom again and found that other strains helped with my anxiety, panic attacks, depression, fatigue, brain fog, and cold and flu symptoms. I have been taking it ever since.

I have suffered with anxiety, depression and panic attacks most of my life. It can be debilitating when it is bad. Psychiatry failed me. I had to do a lot of spiritual and psychological work on my own to get me where I am today. Kratom has become one of a few coping mechanisms I use to get by. I was on prescriptions but they gave me horrible side effects, were addictive, and/or made the anxiety worse between doses. I have been using kratom now for about 2 years and it has drastically improved my quality of life.

Kratom has become an important part of my life. When I feel a panic attack coming on, kratom is one of a few things I can rely on to function. Do you know what it is like to have to randomly deal with a panic attack when you have important things to do? It's embarrassing, inconvenient, paralyzing and completely debilitating. It can have a very detrimental effect on a person's life. To take kratom away from responsible adults who are harmlessly using it to improve their lives, is cruel, irresponsible, inhumane, and completely unforgivable. Also, if the FDA is really concerned about the opioid epidemic, this has been a proven solution. Just read the testimonies from all the addicts using this to safely get off of opioids. Banning kratom means that the FDA is consciously allowing and causing more opioid overdoses to happen. How can the FDA dismiss the thousands of reports from people citing its safety and beneficial effects? How are we all wrong? This should be available to everyone who needs it. Banning this only serves to protect the pharmaceutical industry not the public's safety.

Bottom line, kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues. It has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 12:28:01 PM

Greetings FDA!

I am 64 years old and retired (disabled). I worked for The (b) (6) as Sr. Compliance Engineer. In 2011, I was forced to take disability due to five (5) unsuccessful back surgeries and chronic pain (CP). I have been under the care of a Pain Management (PM) doctor since 2007 for CP, and I am in good standing with my all of my doctors.

I strongly oppose the FDA's position on Kratom. Many CP patients exchange psychological pain in return for limited physical relief - I was one of them. In addition to the dismal side effects of opiates, we are treated like drug addicts on parole. For those of us who have access to treatment, the presumption of guilt overshadows and influences all aspects of said treatment. We must sign a one sided contract, which robs us of our rights as patients. If we refuse, we are denied treatment and we suffer. Our privacy is invaded with drug testing and pill counting. Many doctors viewed us as a liability and marginalized us as human beings. No other class of patients endures this kind of treatment! Can you find equality and due process promised to us by the Constitution in the setting described above? What about our rights!

This experience lead me to discovered Kratom in 2016, I have found this plant to be safe and effective in reducing pain without the side effects of opiates. It is also less expensive than doctor's visits and medication. It has been good for my mental well being, too. Since I discontinued the use of prescribed opiates, my blood pressure has dropped. My cognitive ability has returned to normal and did so proportionally as I reduced the intake of pain medication, and for 12 months I have not needed opiates to control my pain. I am able to do more chores around the house. I can make plans without worrying about the restrictions of being tied to one pharmacy or obtaining a written script every 30 days (PM contract), which includes a 2.5-hour drive. I don't have to worry about the pharmacy being out of the medication, or endure being viewed as a "drug seeker" by the pharmacy technicians. CP is bad enough on its own, but when combined with the medical treatment that comes with it, it can make life unbearable. Imagine what this would be like for you. Would you want this kind of treatment for yourself, or a parent, spouse, or child? Think long and hard about it!

Also, after 6 months of using Kratom to control my pain, I went to my regular doctor to get blood tests and a general physical. This was to ensure my renal and liver functions had remained normal. The test reported that I am completely healthy except for the degenerative disease that causes my pain, which started in 2006.

If the FDA removes this herbal supplement from the market, then thousands of people will be forced to obtain opiates both legally and illegally. Fortunately, I can go back to my PM doctor. But, if Kratom becomes unavailable in the US, then I will leave the US and move to a more compassionate country where I can obtain Kratom legally.

I hope you take my words seriously as their are many who share my experience.

Kind Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 12:20:02 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

Please reconsider your stance on kratom. The plant has amazing qualities that help many people.

I have seen first hand people dying from the opioid epidemic, from respiratory suppression. Kratom does not suppress breathing, and it is an abuse of power to publicly say it is. Please publicly provide the scientific study that proves the effects on respiration.

I have been a molecular and microbiologist for 15 years, and the science behind your claims needs to be scrutinized by outside scientists.

Thank You,

(b) (6)

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S8+, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 10:02:42 AM

Commissioner:

I want to be as respectful as I can, but you will understand if I am angry when I explain. I am a 60 year old woman. I was implanted with transvaginal mesh in 2002. That mesh destroyed my internal organs and made it impossible to be a wife to my husband for 7 years. I finally had most of it removed in 2013.

I will spend the rest of my life fighting pain from the mesh and the damage done to my back from a MRSA infection that ate through my spine. The FDA approved that mesh. The FDA has approved a lot of medicine and implants that have proven to be fatal.

Because of everything that has happened to me I have chosen a more holistic approach of caring for myself. I use massage and supplements for my needs now.

A very large part of my holistic approach is kratom.

Sir, please excuse me, but God gave me a mind and He gave me control of this body. There have been several times medical science has almost killed me. I don't trust you and frankly, many Americans, especially women, share my view.

So if you ban kratom, what will be next, Devil's Claw? Kava? Turmeric? I am asking you to stop this madness, and back off of kratom. I like the stuff. It's no more addicting than coffee.

Some of us don't have insurance, don't want to use pharmaceuticals, and don't appreciate how the medical community treats us. Have YOU ever been to a pain clinic? You are stripped of all dignity, treated like a criminal, and looked down on like scum. I cannot bring myself to go to one.

I am respectfully requesting you again review what you have been told about kratom, the information the AKA has submitted, and leave our herb alone.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 12:05:40 AM

Ya know, I'd love to be kind about this but I just cannot. You guys are hurting so many innocent responsible adults. Kratom literally saved my life and a dozen of my friends have died from heroin laced with fentanyl and last month my girlfriend died from a tiny amount of heroin when she slipped up and it was laced with fentanyl. She was clean for months. She was born to drug user parents. More and more people are going to be and had a lot of pain and got started on prescribed opioids and the doctors pulled her off cold turkey never warning her about withdrawal. I personally live with chronic pain and also got hooked on opioids by doctors who didn't warn me how awful I'd feel after being taken right off of them without weening down. Kratom has literally saved my life. Now, you probably just think of me as a useless drug addict. But my parents and my friends and family are SO grateful that I was finally able to quit using much worse opioids with the help of kratom. With Kratom I have gotten my life back.

Please do NOT give me some crap about doing it for my own good. I am an adult and I do NOT need or desire your guidance. But everyone knows it is about money for you and stuff like this just makes people HATE the government. The "Reefer Madness" days where you were able to demonize marijuana with hyperbolic BULLSHIT are still alive and well and you couldn't be happier about it. I do not smoke marijuana but the fact that people have their lives ruined over it in 2017 will be viewed by the future as barbaric and disgusting.

Maybe this isn't actually helping the cause but I just do not care right now. My own mother hates Vicodin and just had back surgery and kratom has been a beautiful gift for her and now you are taking our gift of a plant away from us. You do not want adults to have the ability to use plants as medicine. Alcohol has so much less medicinal use and kills so soooo many more people, even if I grant you your silly lie of a number about healthy adults who supposedly died from just a kratom overdose, it still isn't remotely close. This is just corruption and all about money. Again, do not tell me you are trying to save me from myself or possible harmful stuff in kratom. I know thousands of people who use it and that has literally never happened to any of them. The vast majority of them are older responsible adults living with pain who don't want RX opioids and you are taking that chance from them. You want to punish us and turn us into a criminals? I'd ask "why?" but I already know the stock answer I will get from you and this plea is falling on the deaf ears of extremely evil people posing as saviors.

I kept this much nicer in tone than I'd love to have made it and I apologize to all the wonderful users of kratom who just desperately want to just be left in peace to use a plant which has enhanced their life in such a huge way, the same way it did for me.

I know I am just an ex drug user scumbag in your eyes but I am telling you, the majority of kratom users are older responsible hard working adults who never used opioids without a prescription and finally found relief just to have a criminal enterprise take it away from them. And they aren't going to be happy about it.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:38:31 PM

Dear FDA Commissioner,

I am writing today as a concerned citizen. The recent smear campaign against Kratom has been quite upsetting. I feel I should voice my support for the positive effect Kratom has on my life.

Kratom has been apart of my life for over 2 years now and I have found it to have an enormous positive impact. I was in an accident over 20 years ago and refused to take opioids do the the fact that they are so addictive. Unfortunately, Tylenol was my main option for pain(which is also a dangerous drug if taken too often).

Since I have found Kratom, I have not had to take any pain relieving medications. I have also found it to have a positive impact on my mood.

I ask that you take a moment to realize that making Kratom illegal is only going to have a negative outcome.

I thank you for taking the time to read my email. I hope you take into consideration my positive words and the numerous other emails I'm sure you are to receive, and do not move forward with scheduling Kratom. Please keep it legal.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom accessibility
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 10:13:24 AM

Greeting,

My name is (b) (6), I'm 40, from (b) (6). I'd like to voice my opinion on your recent stance on kratom. I feel your warnings about it's dangers are absurd. Kratom is completely safe. Your claims of 36 deaths caused by kratom, is ludicrous. Surely those deaths we're caused by other chemicals, as is the case whenever we hear about these deaths.

Banning it would only serve to stifle research. Not to mention people will die from opioid overdoses, when they turn back to hard drugs because kratom gone.

Kratom has helped me tremendously. My heroin days are gone, and I'm free to live life. I suffer chronic pain and severe anxiety, and this natural plant is a safe natural alternative to drugs with much more pronounced side effects, drugs like oxycodone, methadone, and benzos.

The plant is God's tool to combat our nation's severe opiate epidemic. I've seen my friend die from heroin, right in my arms. (b) (6) a loving kind hearted spirit, left the sweetest little boy when she died. (b) (6) ...two other souls gone, who didn't have access to the kratom miracle.

My thoughts are simple. To me, during our nation's opiate epidemic, for you to take action against Kratom is not only irresponsible, but the work of the Devil. Please dont choose to kill, please I'm begging you, choose life. Do the right thing. God be with you, may God guide your hand.

Adam Baier

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom advisory
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 8:47:06 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

You draw parallels with the opioid epidemic and mention that kratom has similar effects to narcotics but fail to mention the most significant effect it does not share with conventional opioids—respiratory depression. Thirty-six deaths associated with (not caused by) kratom is statistical noise, especially when compared with the tens of thousands of deaths *caused* by conventional opioids. People will always find a way to get high, kratom is definitely the lesser of two evils. A similar disingenuous use of statistics common to anti-kratom press releases is the 10-fold increase in poison center reports. This was an increase from a few (or none) to a few more. Hundreds of reports is insignificant compared to the thousands of reports for just about any substance you can think of, especially when the kratom did not result in significant toxicity.

This seems very much like a puritanical political move and very little like a public health decision. You are interfering with American businesses and depriving Americans of a product that they feel they derive benefit from (whether the evidence for that benefit exists yet or not). I believe the FDA has a role to play in preventing sellers from making unsubstantiated claims and in informing the public of risks. The FDA should not, however, be preventing imports, seizing products, or assisting the DEA in a move towards prohibition with hysterical press releases that misrepresent the facts.

The war on drugs has been an absolute failure. I have worked on the frontlines of healthcare as a paramedic and emergency nurse (I now work in patient safety). I lost a close friend to opioid abuse. I well know the harm caused by drug abuse. With that perspective I ask that you leave this one alone. If addicts and chronic pain patients are able to stay off the far more dangerous opioids, let them do so. Rather than how many deaths have been loosely associated with kratom, the focus should be how many deaths have been *prevented* by people using kratom in place of other opioids?

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom allowed me stop a daily drinking habit of 5 years.
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 11:54:53 AM

I used to drink almost everyday for about five years, I had gained about sixty pounds, had constant abdominal pain, amongst other problems caused by my drinking habit. When I found out about kratom, I was instantly able to stop drinking, as I gradually replaced my urges to drink with a teaspoon of kratom. I'm not going to sit here and tell you that kratom doesn't have the potential to form habits, of course it does, but that doesn't mean you should go NUCLEAR and out-right ban it. It's helped myself and thousands of others stop drinking, which is WAY worse for you than kratom is. You can't overdose on kratom like you can opioids, as if you take too much you'll throw up, and there is diminishing returns in the amount you take. Which means less is more when it comes to kratom.

Aside from all of that, you have to realize that you will be making thousands of otherwise normal Americans now criminals, who possess kratom, and that is a very dangerous thing to do. I think it's a very ill-informed idea to ban kratom, the reasons that have been given for attempting to do so are not based in fact, and if you actually look into the 36 deaths that kratom was linked to, I can guarantee there was a mixture of drugs going on.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and my point of view
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 7:58:22 PM

I am proof! Kratom saves people of all walks of life. It is safe, natural, not nearly as addictive as Pharmaceuticals, and a great way to treat a large number of diseases, both mentally, and physically. I have successfully treated bad alcoholism that I have been suffering from for 11 years. Kratom is NOT going to cause me to get multiple DUIs, it's not going to cause me to lose my liver, or my job. Kratom will not destroy my relationships. I have made great strides in my life thanks to this plant. I can now hold a job, I can hold a relationship together. Im not sitting in jail today from the "evil crimes kratom caused me to do." I have however spent days in jail thanks to a legal drug. Alcohol! Perfectly legal for anybody 21+. Guess what? Ethanol is poison. Ethanol kills hundreds of thousands. Ethanol causes death, destruction, and just an overall horrible life in general! Coffee, it is legal. The caffeine in coffee is considered a drug. And causes strokes, heart attacks, high blood pressure, and even stomach issues. Perfectly legal, for anybody. Even small children. Nicotine! Another legal drug is nicotine. Nicotine, or tobacco in general kills thousands upon thousands of people. Perfectly legal. Is kratom a cure all miracle herb? Absolutely not. But, it sure does help millions of people. A plant in the coffee family, under scrutiny only because it some what "tickles" certain opiod receptors. Withdrawal from Kratom for me is no worse then coffee. When I stop I feel fine. Kratom, once again for me, is no more intoxicating then a good cup of coffee. Once again, it is a close cousin to coffee. Why are we not banning coffee? This whole thing is mind boggling not only to me but millions of other people. People suffering from Depression. People suffering from Anxiety. People suffering from Addiction. People suffering from chronic pain. One of the arguments from your side is, and I quote "it has not been scientifically evaluated, There is no reputable evidence of anything good." WRONG. Firstly, there have definitely been studies. Secondly, We the people of this "great" country are the proof. Another false claim is "Kratom is leading to other addictions." WRONG. Kratom is leading AWAY, from addiction. Can I continue recovery without kratom? Absolutely, it might be a little rockier, but myself, and many others absolutely could. Especially considering many of us have either been there or we work in the recovery community for others. I myself am a chairman of my local home group Alcoholics Anonymous and I will tell you this, Taking action against Kratom, in the way your doing is wrong on many, many levels. Your attacking US citizens. You are directly causing problems with our wellbeing. Nothing good will come from scheduling it, and making synthetic compounds of the alkaloids in kratom besides lining the pockets of you, and your colleagues. And sending more money to big Pharma because it is seen as a threat to their prosperity when we as citizens decide to take advantage of a God given right by treating ourselves naturally and holistically. Nothing, good will come from banning it completely. This whole ordeal screams Corruption, greed, Fear tactics, and propaganda. This is unfair to the United States constitution. It is, unfair to us as citizens to have to deal with misinformation and lies. This is not the 1930s. We should be passed this! We, as a community have enough intelligence to realise this. I am not saying kratom is a miracle plant. Even though it seems like it. Im not saying it is without flaws. Afterall, what isnt? I am not trying to attack you or the FDA/DEA. What im trying to say is, and you know what this is truly about, if you have any room in your heart. If you even have a heart at all. If you truly care about the integrity, and overall well being of this great country, the country i grew up proud to be in, then you will LEAVE KRATOM ALONE. COMPLETELY JUST BACK OFF AND LEAVE US BE. If not, then I no longer truly know what this country even stands for anymore other then corruption. We have an army of support. Why must you start another war over our freedom?

Im going to be doing alot of praying the next upcoming months. Not only for this country, and us as a community. But, also, im going to be praying that you can see the light in this nonsense. What right do you have to try and take something like this from us? None. Cut the madness.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and my story. TRUTH
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 7:08:51 AM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I'm a 36 year old father of 4, a husband and a business owner. 11 years ago I started getting horribly sick, nausea, vomiting and debilitating stomach pain. I spent years of my time and ten of thousands of dollars on doctors, specialists, different medications and treatments. Finally after about 6 years of trying to do what's right by following and taking the advise and medications of so many doctors, I found myself addicted to prescription pain medication. I spent 4 years addicted, taking upwards of 300 to 400 milligrams of roxycodone daily. I lost job after job, home after home and almost lost my wife who has been with me through the beginning of my illness.. in an act of desperation, while going through withdrawals from opiates and contemplating suicide, a friend told me about Kratom and offered me some. At that point I was very skeptical but willing to try anything. He mixed 4 grams of Kratom with 6 ounces of orange juice. After choking down that awful tasting drink, within about 30 minutes, my withdrawal simptoms, became tolerable.. I continued to take 4 ounces of Kratom, twice a day until I was completely over the withdraws, and got myself a job. Finally, after all of those years, I had hope! I was so excited, until I became ill once again. After several trips to the emergency room, and telling them "no narcotics, I'm a recovering addict" they told me the same thing I've heard dozens of times before, "we can't find anything wrong with you". That's when I decided to start taking Kratom again. I've been taking 5-6 gram doses, twice a day for almost a year and haven't gotten sick the first time, haven't been carried by ambulance to the ER, and feel better, physically and mentally, than I have in over a decade. I went from extremely sick, to very healthy. From drug addict to successful business owner. From a lousy father, to the man who is able to give my children the life they deserve, and I owe it all the this wonderful plant that through fear and ignorance on the part of the same people who said "tramadol is a safe and effective alternative to narcotics". The same people who, somehow have a say in how I live MY life, is going to be taken away from me. Of the "36 deaths" that the FDA claims where caused by Kratom. How many of those where TRULY caused by Kratom? How many of those people had tramadol or some other harmful chemical in their systems as well?

I understand that pharmaceutical companies have a LOT to lose if kratom continues to be legal and I'm sure the FDA has a lot to gain from those pharmaceutical companies if they ban kratom, but when you consider the RIGHT thing to do, I think you'll find that banning yet another gift from God, IS NOT the right thing to do..

Thank you for taking the time to read my story. Thank you for considering doing what's right.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban.
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 9:10:01 PM

The fda has so many other things it could be doing but instead we waste our taxpayers money fighting against kratom. Kratom has helped saved so many 1000s from harmful pharmaceutical medicine.

We seen this same thing happen in other countries. Kratom becomes popular. You guys lose money on opiate sales. Death rate goes down. Peoples quality of life goes up from getting off your pharmaceutical posion and then a battle takes place to ban kratom. You guys do not care about saving the citizens from harmful medicine. This is a money based operation. What you guys are doing is despicable. You should be ashamed of yourselves. Greed has a way of changing people. Please look outside yourselves and your pocket book and really look into the lives that kratom has made better. You can not take all that money with you to the afterlife but you can make a difference and stand with us the American people and put a stop to this ridiculous war that is being waged against a very therapeutic plant.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Safety Warning
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 10:57:25 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

I am writing in response to the Public Safety Warning you issued last week. There were some major inaccuracies in your statement that I would like to address.

My name is (b) (6). I am a 46-year-old single mother of one son. When I was 27 years old, I was diagnosed with degenerative disc disease and underwent my first back surgery for a herniated disc. Since then, I have had 3 more surgeries. My entire cervical spine is fused. My doctors started me with low-dose Vicodin and gradually over the years, as the pain refused to subside, increased my dosages. They also prescribed me a variety of stronger meds, including Oxycontin, Morphine, Methadone, Fentanyl, Opana, Exalgo, Dilaudid, and a slew of benzodiazepines and antidepressants.

Despite taking as many painkillers as a cancer patient, I lived in great pain. Many weekends I was in such pain that I couldn't get out of bed. I became a prisoner to the meds, my day revolving around waiting anxiously to take my next pill. I wasn't able to be the mother I wanted to be for my son. I was an addict, and although I didn't like the person I had become, I didn't see a way out. The pain was just too intense.

That is when a friend in the chronic pain community told me about kratom. Desperate for relief, I gave it a try. To my immense surprise, I felt better on day one of kratom that I had felt in years! Soon, my massive pill regimen, including 6-30mg Oxycodone, 2-40mg Opana, 3-10mg Valium, was no longer needed.

Kratom has allowed me to function on a daily basis without even thinking about the pain that once consumed me. It has been more effective than any pill I've taken. It has given me my life back and allowed me to do things I haven't done in ten years. I'm actually working part-time now, which seemed an impossibility before kratom. More importantly, kratom has allowed me to be the mother that my son deserves.

It's been nearly two years since I've taken medication (except for a daily Zyrtec). Looking back, I realize that prescription opioids robbed me of precious years as a parent. I'm one of the lucky ones, though, because I'm able to share my success story, unlike the many victims of opioids who have overdosed and died.

I never want to go back to a life of pain meds. Kratom is the safe alternative that I demand, as a responsible adult, to use to cope with my pain. Studies have proven kratom does not suppress one's breathing. You can't overdose on kratom, and you can't get high from it. Kratom is helping a broad spectrum of people, including parents, grandparents, veterans, doctors, nurses, and lawyers who live as productive members of society. This plant could literally be the answer to the Big Pharma-manufactured opioid epidemic, yet you claim it could expand the epidemic? This statement could not be more false. Just look at the countless testimonies from people who have quit opioids thanks to kratom.

Yes, it is true that a small number of unscrupulous vendors have laced kratom with other, more harmful substances. This is why the kratom community encourages regulation, to ensure we are buying unadulterated leaf. Given kratom's enormous potential to boost overall wellbeing, the focus should be on regulating kratom while keeping it readily available, not banning or scheduling so that it becomes either illegal or impossible to acquire.

My fear is that the FDA, pharmaceutical companies, and the DEA will refuse to look past the money that kratom is costing them. The idea of classifying kratom as a schedule 1 substance is ludicrous and dishonest. Surely you know that kratom is saving lives, not ending them. Even the few number of people who died with kratom in their system were taking other, more dangerous substances concurrently. In truth, there is not a single death that can be objectively attributed to kratom alone, despite its use for many centuries in Southeast Asia. Your claim that kratom can cause seizures, liver problems, and addiction is not backed by science. Nor is it even backed by circumstantial evidence. If kratom were so dangerous, why aren't more ER doctors and law enforcement aware of it? Why aren't rehabs flooded with kratom addicts? The answer is simple, even if it's not profitable to Big Pharma: Kratom is not a danger.

You stated that there is no proof of kratom's medicinal benefits, but the 22,000 comments to the DEA from last year and the many testimonials on the AKA website prove otherwise. So, too, does the science. Drs. Henningfield, McCurdy, and Babin have all spoken at length about kratom's low risk profile and wonderful medicinal properties. You seem to know this is a fact as well, because it's no secret kratom is being researched as a pill so Big Pharma can profit from this plant. But we are talking about human lives, Mr. Gottlieb. The repercussions of your untruths will be catastrophic. I implore you, don't force chronic pain sufferers like me to go back to pharmaceuticals. I want to live, not take a pill that may stop my heart.

Thank you for reading this letter, and I hope you will reconsider your previous statements.

(b) (6)

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Saved My Life
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:53:51 PM

Dir. Gottlieb-

I saw your interview about kratom and would like to share my story with you:

Due to various injuries over the years, I suffer from degenerative disc disease, C2-8 nerve damage, spinal stenosis and arthritis of the cervical spine. For several years I went to pain management doctors and clinics, where I was loaded up on many drugs including Hydrocodone, Fentanyl and Oxycodone, along with anti-inflammatories and nerve pills. I have been given nerve blocks and steroid injections that did not work. Last year it was revealed that my lumbar 4/5 disc was almost completely blown out and I would need a fusion. My pain management doctor argued with me about giving me the results of my MRI to take to my neurosurgeon, insisting, "I can take care of everything you need right here." I immediately fired him and realized that I needed to go to a detox in order to get any pain relief after the fusion surgery. In PARC Memorial-Hermann of Houston's Chronic Pain detox program I learned that I suffered from "opioid-induced hyperalgesia," where my neurotransmitters were basically fried from years of narcotics and my brain was telling my body I was in greater pain than I actually was and thus needed more drugs. I detoxed for 2 weeks and had my surgery. After the surgery, I was given Norco 10s but a friend of mine had also sent me some kratom. The kratom actually provided better and longer-lasting pain relief than the pills (my neurotransmitters will not repair themselves for at least another year).

For about 2 years I had been suffering severe depression about my poor quality of life due to my physical state and by the time I went into detox I was close to suicidal. I isolated from friends and family and my love relationship suffered greatly. But with kratom, I could think more clearly and actually began to stop feeling emotionally dead. I was enjoying life again.

By August I was weaned off kratom when on 8/19, I was rear ended by a texting driver. My car went over the curb and rolled onto the passenger side. I now have a Pilon fracture of the right ankle for which I had to have surgery on 9/27 and am in a wheelchair for 12 weeks. I have a long and difficult recovery ahead of me. Kratom and Tylenol are the only things I take for pain relief and the amount of kratom is 1 heaping teaspoon every 5 hours... minimal. I can function, am clear-headed and trying to have a positive outlook despite the horror I endured.

Several people have read or heard my story and become curious about kratom and I have helped opioid addicts as well as chronic pain "legal addicts" get off narcotics with kratom. Their quality of life has improved drastically both physically and mentally.

If the FDA were to suddenly ban kratom, it would ruin many lives. It is not in itself a killer— it is a life saver. We are in the midst of an opioid epidemic of crisis proportions and this leaf holds the key. The 36 cases of death kratom has been "associated" with have been proven to involve other substances and if you look at the overall picture, that number of deaths is minimal when compared to the hundreds dying of opioid and heroin overdoses every day in our country.

Kratom needs to be studied and regulated for quality and purity standards. I was fortunate to find a source that holds to high standards and have been very pleased but know that many other suppliers including retail supplement and "head" shops have just jumped on the trend with no regards to implementing quality.

Don't ban kratom— regulate it and allow science to discover the many benefits it provides. Of course it can be abused but kratom by itself in massive doses only causes the abuser to vomit. You will allow Fentanyl to remain—that is a proven killer. And Oxycodone/oxycontin. Why?

The grossly negative smear campaign against kratom that is being perpetrated is a disservice to the citizens of this country who are being handed "solutions" that kill supplied by irresponsible doctors and Big Pharma. Is that what this comes down to— corporate interests over the health and well being of Americans? If so, it is a sad statement

about the FDA's abuse of power.

The ban of 2016 was stopped by all kinds of people for good reason. Instead of the FDA potentially throwing our country's pain patients, veterans and opioid addicts into a state of panic why not become a hero and do the right thing? Be part of the solution, don't exacerbate the problem. Kratom has already saved thousands of us.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom saved my life
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 5:32:38 PM

hi my name is (b) (6) i am 37 years old.I would like to voice my support of kratom and my total disagreement with the fda .kratom has saved millions of lives.there is a incredible opiate epidemic killing millions and big pharma and the fda keep coming out with new deadly meds that does not help people but kill them . Kratom has done nothing but help save lives and help people become a asset to society helps them get off drugs.my personal story i was dying and had my whole family reject due to my behavior and actions when i was prescribed pain meds(oxycontin,dilaudid,morphine,fetynl)due to a injured arm i became totally addicted sold all my belongings, furniture,jewelry and i even sold my dog for a pill.I was sick these drugs that are FDA APPROVED RUINED MY LIFE BIG PHARMA RUINED MY LIFE they kept given me more even when they can clearly see it was killing me.I needed to find a way to change my life,i tried NA and i still could not stop i been to over 10 rehabs and still can not stop , all they did at rehab was give me different drugs it was a joke.i then met someone that told me about kratom i tried it and was amazed how it took away all my cravings, all my bad behaviors,and made me back to who i was a loving human being.s

this story is only a nut shell on how kratom saved my life and hundreds of people i personally know.i now have my own business and am connected to my family again and have been sober for years all because of kratom .PLEASE if the FDA has any commen sense and care about the humans on this planet they would stop this ludicrous lies about kratom and should go after the real enemy pain meds.science backs up kratom with facts it is not deadly.how come there are facts that pain meds and alcohol kill millions and the FDA does nothing about it ?????????? why is that?????????

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom should not be made illegal
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 7:11:02 PM

This sort of Prohibition nonsense has got to stop. We are well aware of why these legislative pushes are being made. This is the influence of the pharmaceutical industries trying to subvert true capitalism. There is no danger in using kratom. The autopsy is that I've seen from the supposed Kratom deaths Did not even include kratom in the toxicology report. Kratom Is the best current solution for our opioid epidemic does not lead people to opiates many people have used it to get off opiates and to stay off opiates. Do not vote to make this illegal. I am begging you. You will have a very angry public if Any attempt at making this natural substance illegal is successful. Thank you

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 9:39:58 AM

Scott,

C'mon man, Do some research before you nose into our private lives and take away something that has, for many, improved their quality of life. I have taken Kratom for pain for 3+ years. You do not act or perceive anything in life differently like an opiod/narcotic would. It SIMPLY HELPS.

I am a middle aged man with a good steady job and a daughter in college, not some junkie looking for you to keep my "good times a-rollin". Like all you folks in government positions, Get your head out of your ass and LISTEN to the PEOPLE. Have some facts to back up your talk. Take away beer why don't you? Alcohol kills people...That's a FACT. I don't see you knocking tall-boys out of anybodys hands. Why cant you be a stand-up guy? Give up this fight and concentrate on Opiods or some other crap that is actually ruining peoples lives. That would be refreshing in todays government. I know this letter won't make any difference to you. You are all the same.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

& Kratom user

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Leave kratom alone
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 9:34:11 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I am writing you to express my absolute displeasure with your war on mitragyna speciosa. I speak for not only myself, but for my wife - who uses kratom to manage chronic pain resulting from scoliosis. I speak for my friends who have gone through the SSRI antidepressant gauntlet and found no relief or hope until they found kratom.

I have suffered from depression for half of my life and an opiate addiction for a year of it and I have kratom to thank for that, not Zoloft and not some replacement synthetic opioid like suboxone that leaves you just as crippling a spot as you were on illicit opiates.

You're running a smear campaign and it's easy to see that. Kratom is not part of the opioid epidemic. It's part of the solution and you present it as being otherwise, which seems really shady when you consider the fact that it doesn't cause respiratory depression or fatal overdose and that multiple patents have recently been filed on hydroxymitragynine, mitragynine and pseudoindoxyl-mitragynine derivative drugs. The quest to outlaw a relatively benign entheogen couldn't possibly be a means to eliminate a threat to the bottom line of big pharma, could it? I believe that it could be and that it very well is just that.

My wife and I have a 2 year old daughter who I never would have been ok with having in the context of the unstable state that, without kratom, probably never would have returned to homeostasis. Kratom is what enables my wife, who is typically in chronic excruciating pain, to have the energy and relief to be an active and engaging mother. I've seen what chronic pain sufferers in the opiate trap look like. It's a slow degradation into a state of being half alive. The pharmaceutical industry has thus far been unable to offer a better alternative; a better medicine for chronic pain than kratom. In fact, every single opioid analgesic on the market carries with them a huge risk.

Kratom doesn't need a synthetic version. If it ain't broken don't fix it, unless of course you're a soulless big pharma shill and have already made peace with your inevitable seat in hell. In that case, light the world on fire and watch as you make a buck on the unraveling of the lives of Americans and American families.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Leave Kratom Alone
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 4:22:32 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 28-year-old male from Burbank, CA. I am voicing my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and the way they are trying to control kratom. Despite the smear campaigns online, kratom alone has not been proven to cause a single death. You cannot blame kratom for deaths that involved a cocktail of other dangerous drugs. That is illogical, as I am sure you know.

I used to abuse alcohol and painkillers. Too much money was spent on those substances. I have now quit alcohol and opiates with the aid of kratom. I learned about kratom online. The first time I tried it I noticed how much it helped with my chronic anxiety. Instead of turning to dangerous drugs I could continue using kratom instead.

Kratom has given me a huge part of my life back. I am glad to no longer be consuming alcohol. I knew that it was a dangerous problem that would catch up to me eventually. It is quite scary how complacent we have all gotten with alcohol. We have both an opiate AND alcohol epidemic in the US.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs. It has changed my life for the better. I can wake up with more energy and motivation than I could before. I fear the current action being taken by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate and alcohol epidemic. So many people can benefit from the subtle effects of this safe plant.

*Focus on something that is actually a problem. Stop the smear campaign. **We fought before and won by a landslide. We will fight again and win.***

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Legalization of Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:18:30 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

There are 53,000 admissions every week and 2400 deaths weekly in the US from the expected side affects of medications. When you add in the hospitalizations and deaths from the misuse pharmaceutical drugs, there are millions of hospitalizations and about 400,000 deaths yearly. This makes pharmaceutical drugs the 3rd most common cause of death in the US! (Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics)

I am a 47 year old retired Law Enforcement Officer that has consumed Kratom for the last 7 years. This is a plant that has helped thousands which you constantly refuse to listen to, me being one of them. I have lived an honorable life that protected the laws and people of the State of Florida. I am not a criminal nor a drug addict and I find it disheartening to be labeled such from legislators simply because I believe in the plant. You are going to find that there are more like me then you care to acknowledge.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I consume kratom for different reasons, I consume kratom for PTSD, anxiety and depression which I have found kratom to have far less side affects then the prescriptions drugs forced down my throat by doctors.

All the studies that have been done to date show how safe kratom is including the studies from Dr McCurdy and Dr. Grumman.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own if forced to take synthetic pharmaceuticals . I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

There have been more deaths to date from caffeinated energy drinks then kratom which we know kratom can not take a life by itself. You are being handed a miracle plant. Order more research, do the right thing, please do not destroy this opportunity to actually help people.

I thank you for your service and time.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 1:10:11 PM

Hello, I am a pastor at (b) (6) Church in (b) (6) .

I was addicted to pain pills for years before finding Kratom. My life was spiraling downward. I now use kratom to control pain and no longer need to use pain pills. My quality of life is much better. I have 5 kids and my wife is a stay at home mom. We survive on my income, which was difficult to make when I was using pain pills. Now that I have been using Kratom, it is no longer difficult to get up and go to work everyday for my family. I am a responsible, functional, tax paying citizen who would probably not be working at all if it wasn't for Kratom.

I know many others like myself who will say the same thing. I've taken it almost everyday for the last 4 years and I've never been better or healthier. It is helping people and will continue to help people. PLEASE do not take it away. Do not be blind. Do not listen to people who are not being honest about the situation. You are in office to protect the public. Taking this away is not going to protect us. It is only going to cause MORE problems. There are so many other things that pose an infinitely stronger threat to our citizens. You are focused on the wrong one.

--

(b) (6)
Worship & Creative Arts Pastor
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 10:33:15 PM

Hi i would like to ask you not to banned the plant Kratom it was put on earth to help folks not harm them or kill them. I am living proof. It helps me be able to go to work when i don't feel good from tired hurting joints. I have a very physical job and I'm not getting any younger. I use this plant and other natural plants and herbs to help me instead of chemically made medicines like Tylenol or Aleve those make me sick. I like using natural medicine before anything with chemicals. I use home remedies and even grow my own plants and herbs. I enjoy my garden for fresh vegetables, parsley mint etc. i like living a healthier life. More people are turning to living much healthier nowadays. I would like to have my choice of what i put into my body. I don't need a doctor prescribing medicines. I will not take them. I refuse any prescriptions. God has provided me with all the natural things to live a healthier life as well you and the whole world. That was God's intentions and we need to honor that and use the things he has provided us to live. If you were to ban this plant it would be like working foe the Devil. We have enough bad in this world and we need more good. This dietary supplement is a God sent and we should not have it taken away. There are many more plants that help the human body. So many i thank God for. Thank you for listening to me. I know im probably just a no one to you. But im a mother and i need to stay healthy with the help of this leaf. Im not a bad person I've never been in trouble and i don't use drugs. I go to church and work that's all i do. I don't want to see anymore bad in this world and this could help so many folks. I wish i didn't have to write this to you i wish you would understand how important this is and safe it is. Like i said im living proof along with millions of more.

Thank you!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 6:48:48 PM

Good day sir. I am writing you in regards to FALSE information you put out about KRATOM this week. It's very disappointing to see someone who is supposed to be looking out for the best interests of America blatantly lie in your public health advisory you put out. Sir you are very wrong about kratom. It saved my life after I became addicted to pain pills prescribed by a dirty Dr in South Florida 10 years ago. I almost killed myself using that poison. I found kratom in Palm beach county in 2007 and have been clean ever since. I am productive member of society. I pay my taxes. I follow the laws. I am a good person. I have the right to choose what I want to put in my body. I AM LIVING PROOF THAT KRATOM WORKS. I TAKE NOTHING ELSE. KRATOM ONLY. I am healthier than I have EVER BEEN. We deserve to be heard. We deserve to choose safe alternatives that are natural. I do not want your poison pills or medicines. I urge you to do the right thing and retract your statements about kratom that are simply not true. The 36 deaths you claim every single one of them had other very serious drugs in their system and or underlying medical conditions that were pre existing. I will write you every single day until you put the truth out. I trusted the FDA at one time but now that's no longer possible. If you'll lie about a harmless plant you will lie about anything. So I look forward to hearing from you if you would like to hear from the people you are in office to PROTECT. Please show me the FRAME can do the job they're made for. Thanks for your time. #iamkratom

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 2:29:50 AM

Hi. My name is (b) (6). I have a terrible, debilitating disease known as muscular dystrophy. It takes my quality of life from me. It first took my ability to run, and I'm finding it harder to walk now. This disease deteriorates my muscles slowly. I slowly suffer. But I found kratom and my disease progression has stopped. I am now building muscle because of kratom. I can now work 6 days a week because of kratom. I have the relief and energy to do things I thought I'd never do again. Kratom is harmless. I've drank it everyday now for a year. I am healthier than ever. Clearly haven't died. The only "side effect" of kratom is nausea, if you take too much and before kratom can ever kill you, you'll puke it up. Without kratom I will be forced to turn to prescription painkillers that cause respiratory failure, coma and death. Think about what you're doing. Think about all the people who use kratom who will be forced to turn to other sources of relief, some not so good. Look at the uproar already, the number of innocent americans that rely on a natural plant for relief. Think of what will follow if you do ban kratom. You will have some seriously pissed off people. Give us our RIGHT to use a NATURAL PLANT for relief. Taking that right is completely and utterly unconstitutional. Think about what will happen, when us americans band together in uproar about this. More people die a year from TYLENOL than all the kratom RELATED (kratom never the root cause) deaths. In 20 YEARS, 38 people have died with kratom in their system. Most of those deaths were caused by other drugs, or other factors. There has not been a single autopsy that has been released where kratom alone was the sole cause of death. That's because kratom is not lethal. Please remember that your JOB is to do what's best for americans. And banning kratom sure as hell isn't benefiting any of us.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Mitragyna Speciosa
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 6:11:32 PM

Hello there! My name is (b) (6) I am 27 years old and I live in (b) (6) state.

I will do my best to convey as much sincerity and urgency as I possibly can while remaining formal and respectful. In this letter, I am not a citizen of a country addressing a government agency, I am simply one human being addressing another. I hope my words will be interpreted in such a manner

For the better part of a decade, I have lived with with crippling anxiety, panic attacks, and depression and have suffered to an unimaginable extent because of it. When I use the word unimaginable, it is not for embellishment or dramatic effect. I mean quite literally, that prior to developing these disorders, I could not even remotely fathom how deep the abyss of suffering could go. It has been a lengthy period, in which I repeatedly and involuntarily enter new and unexplored dark recesses of the human psyche.

This leads me to how I came upon the botanical or plant product known as kratom. I discovered it whilst researching natural or plant based substances that could prove useful in combating my symptoms after having found little success with numerous pharmaceutical treatments. Upon arrival of the order I placed with a highly recommended online vendor, I was very pleasantly surprised! It single-handedly restored a great deal of my sense of well being within a very short span of time and left me in a state of gentle joyfulness and clarity. It had in no way altered my personality or left me inebriated. It in no way affected my rational mind or capacity for critical thinking. It was merely a subtle yet profound boost in mood and overall optimism.

That was a little under 3 years ago and I have taken kratom regularly ever since. It is by no means a miracle cure, and it has acted primarily as an ally while I improve my condition using a variety of other non-medical techniques. This plant has worked remarkably well for not only myself, but countless others. Including those whom I have personally shared it with in everyday life. It can safely and effectively assist with a multitude of different ailments and does so without any serious or even notable side effects.

I strongly urge you to reconsider your campaign to end the legality of kratom for the sake of millions of Americans who have found safe and reliable relief with its use! I would also like to speak on behalf of these people when I say that you are doing far more harm than good and an unforeseeable amount of damage!

Thank you for your time and your service!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Mitragyna Speciosa
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 2:00:51 AM

I have been opiate dependent for over 20 years. For the first time in those 20 years, I have been able to be opiate-free and start to rebuild my life and my relationships. I have not used any type of opiate for 11 months all due to kratom. It took away the fear associated with withdrawal. It let me know I had a fighting chance. It provided relief to the point that I could tolerate the acute withdrawal stage and move to the healing stage. All because of a leaf from a tree grown in Indonesia. I would have never thought it possible. In light of the current opioid epidemic, logic and reason state that by taking away an alternative to a crisis is counterproductive and will only exacerbate the problem. By banning the importation of a dietary supplement called kratom you are essentially taking away a proven safe and effective means of transitioning from opiate dependency to a natural non-opiate substance and eventually sobriety. This makes no logical sense to anyone who understands the problem. Kratom in its natural form is a tea, a leaf, from the coffee family and has been used for thousands of years without any adverse reaction or deaths associated with it. Only when customers and big pharma clientele, (which is really what they are if you're honest), started to decrease instead of increase. The last projected 10 years by Perdue and Smith-Glaxo-Kline were the payday and now we find out why. hey lied to the FDA. They lied to the FDA. They told the public that their product was safe and non-addictive. All lies. How many people have died because of their lies? How many people have been ruined because they were told they would not get addicted, that oxycontin was safe. Millions and counting. Only when the bottom line of these corporations started to show unacceptable monetary losses, those that weren't attributed to death, did kratom become a "public safety concern". Now we find ourselves with a perfectly safe natural alternative that is not only effective for easing withdrawal symptoms but also helps with many other types of issues. It is from the coffee family. It acts much like coffee. And you want to call it dangerous to public safety? We will fight to keep this plant. We will never stop! Once you've escaped the hell of opiate addiction, been set free from the prison it creates, you will do whatever is necessary to not go back. I have tasted freedom and I like it. No, I love and need it. And so do millions of others who are using this dietary supplement. Criminalizing something as benign as kratom will be an all-time low. You will essentially double the current death toll when you do this. People will have to go back to opiates and their blood will be upon your hands because you made something good sound as if it was evil. Please reconsider the 8-Factor analysis the Dr. Henningfield has put forth as well as the immense amount of research available from American Kratom Association and Botanical Educational Alliance. I pray you help us in this time of despair instead of fuel the flames of addiction and death.

Sincerely, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please do not ban Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 8:39:11 PM

Hello Scott,

My name is (b) (6) I am 30 yrs old and a responsible kratom user. I work a 60 hour a week job, and hold many responsibilities. 2 years ago I broke my neck, and subsequently developed nerve damage. I hate being on prescription pain medicine, because of a fear of damage to my body, as well as sickness it causes. I am faced with a choice, take kratom or be in chronic pain. I have made my choice and it has drastically improved my life.

Please don't be near sighted in this, and understand the long term consequences of banning kratom. Thank you for your time, and have a nice day!!

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please hear
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 5:30:56 PM

Hello. My name is (b) (6) Years ago I was given vicodin for neck pain issues. Time went on and after every therapy available i gave in to surgery. Disk fusion. I built a tolerance to vicodin and went on to oxycontin then to fentanyl. I was apathetic and depressed. I soon dropped college . Eventually lost my job. I wanted my life back desperately. In my attempt to do so went on to methadone. This was just as bad as the others if not worse. I slept all day. Lost hope. Gained lot of weight(i used to love fitness and nutrition previously, studied Kinesiology in college. It was a passion, along with family friends animals etc.. I was no longer a productive citizen but burden. I eventually went to rehab and kicked it. Needless to say my neck was killing me. I was taking tylenol and aspirin around the clock, constantly sick. I then found Kratom. Kratom has made my neck pain manageable and given me hope and drive again for life. I am now a good mother , wife, citizen etc.. Kratom has given me my life back. I am absolutely gutted that DEA are banning this life saving herb. This will devastate many lives indeed. This is beyond upsetting. Its ethically wrong. I beg you to reconsider this decision. Thank you for your time

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please rescind your statement on Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:37:05 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb/FDA

I am (b) (6), a 45 year old, responsible adult who consumes kratom. I am writing to voice my support for the continued availability this leaf, and my staunch disagreement with the FDA's recent announcements relating to such.

I have suffered from Crohn's disease – a painful inflammatory condition of the gut that has no cure, and for me has resulted in multiple bowel resection surgeries – since I was 21 years old. I find that this leaf helps me to deal with both the physical and mental/emotional manifestations of this terrible illness. In many ways, kratom has not only saved me, but my marriage, my job and my children.

I used to be on high doses of heavy narcotics to control pain, and antidepressants to control anxiety and panic issues. These were encouraged by my doctors, but they were wreaking havoc on my body and my mind, ultimately jeopardizing all that I hold dear. My discovery of Kratom nearly five years ago now was a watershed moment – a turning point in my life. I no longer need these pills, as just a few grams of whole powdered leaf in hot water helps me work through the worst of the depression and anxiety and pain. At the same time, I remain clear headed, active and present in the moment. I am able to love, and to be loved. This, I found, was difficult or impossible when on pharmaceutical drugs.

My story is one of thousands.

As a father of two, husband and homeowner, I found your recent announcement of your determination to rid the country of kratom to be quite alarming and difficult to understand. Where exactly is this coming from? Kratom is not dangerous in the ways that you have portrayed, and some of the statements you made (e.g., that kratom is an "opioid analogue") are patently incorrect.

Even if you were to factor in these ostensible 36 deaths you are attributing to the plant over ten years (statistically speaking, essentially zero – but it sure sounds scary), falling out of bed has claimed almost 12 times as many lives in the past year alone. I realize such deaths out of the FDA's jurisdiction, but if they weren't, I highly doubt you would consider recommending beds be made illegal.

I simply do not understand, and honestly, your department has done an unsatisfactory job of making its reasoning clear. People suffering from myriad conditions both mental and physical, placed on medications approved by your department which have been proven over and over to destroy lives, were only just beginning to find a natural, comparatively safe path away from those very destructive forces. Now, for reasons that remain a total mystery, you wish to tear this option away. Your thinking seems to be that somehow this prohibition will stem the opioid crisis? I beg to differ – it will only make matters much, much worse.

I ask you to consider what happens when the many thousands of law abiding, responsible citizens – whom the FDA and DEA seem determined to criminalize – turn back to pills or

street drugs, become convalescents, lose their livelihoods, overdose, or die? Do you really not believe you will see a massive spike in these very events when you remove a relatively safe option (proven over thousands of years as well as with recent studies) and force these folks onto substances absolutely *known* to be deadly? Substances which your department has deemed somehow safe? Substances that coincidentally are manufactured by companies backed by powerful lobbies that hold considerable sway over your organization? Come on, now.

It's very difficult for me to see this move as anything but cynical and driven by profit. I urge you to prove to me otherwise. I have lost a hefty amount of faith in our federal government over the past two or three decades, and this decision on your part is likely to be the final nail in the coffin. I am far from alone in this stance. You have probably heard as much in recent days and are sure to hear much more in days to come, and I urge you to take note; these are not the words of drug-addled simpletons, but of lucid, intelligent Americans who see quite clearly what is happening to their country.

Please, step back and reconsider the consequences of your words and actions, as it seems very clear you have yet to do so. There is still a chance for you to redeem yourselves in the eyes of what amounts to millions of Americans. The opioid crisis is one in which the FDA is largely complicit, knowingly or otherwise. I beg you to not make things worse by continuing this push toward the prohibition of kratom.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 3:17:38 PM

Dear Commissioner,

I would like to voice my support for Kratom and disappointment with the FDA's recent misinformation. It is irresponsible for a government agency to announce such inaccurate information regardless if it is on purpose or not. I would like you to make things right and publicly rescind your earlier statements.

My name is (b) (6). I am a 39 year old Sr. Software Architect for an international company. I'm located in (b) (6) State.

I am concerned for not only myself but for all other US citizens that have a better quality of life due to Kratom. If your smear campaign succeeds in outlawing this safe plant, your actions will be hurting many US citizens and I find that unacceptable.

For the majority of my life I have been plagued by numerous digestive issues resulting in extreme pain. I've been to over ten doctors over the years and none of them have been able to find a way to, at the very least, alleviate the symptoms let alone actually fix the problem. When I am drinking Kratom tea, almost all of my symptoms are alleviated and my quality of life is so much better. The FDA's statements put me in danger of going back to constant pain.

The FDA's claims state that Kratom is an analog to opiates and thus is just as dangerous. Kratom does not cause a depression of the respiratory system which is the leading cause of opiate related deaths. I can only determine that the statements provided by the FDA are scare tactics being used for a nefarious purpose. You are definitely not attempting to protect the public. If you wanted to protect the public you would be working on setting standards on which Kratom is sold, and making it so more research can be done on the plant. The FDA should not trying to demonize it by publicly sending out demonstrably false information.

I am a very successful Software Architect. It is a very complicated job that requires, pardon my hubris, an extraordinary brain. Drinking Kratom tea has not negatively affected my work or life at all other than drastically increasing quality of life.

I only came across Kratom through a friend's recommendation when I was describing the amount of pain I was in. They had heard of this wonderful plant and so I decided to give it a try. It fundamentally changed my life. I am now able to confidently go out in public not worried about digestive issues. Again, over ten GI doctors have tried many different things and none were even close to successful. This, so far, has been the only way I have gotten relief and the FDA is actively trying to take it away from me. You can see why this would be quite upsetting to me to think a government agency is actively trying to hurt me while both claiming they are helping me and at the same time lying to the public. This is not China. This is the United States. This behavior is shameful in my opinion.

In summary, I am upset with the FDA's recent actions and I would like them to make it right by rescinding their public safety warning. Instead of trying to hurt us by taking this plant away from us, why don't you work on doing further research and making sure the kratom we

purchase is safe and pesticide free. This plant which I drink as a tea has significantly improved my quality of life and I'm terrified that you will take it away from me for, from what I can only guess is, financial gain. Again, this is the United States. This is not China. The government needs to be honest with the public.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 3:23:43 PM

Hello,

I am a responsible adult and user of kratom. I have constant chronic pain throughout my body, and kratom helps me to manage it more effectively than anything a doctor has given me, and with fewer side effects. My mother uses it daily as well for a painful nerve condition in her face. My 74 year old friend uses it for her arthritis, and my other friend uses it for parkinsons disease, citing it as the most effective thing he has ever used to deal with it.

A ban on kratom, is an attack on nature and humanity itself, and that is no understatement. We the people will not stand for an attack on our god given rights to use natural remedies, and , with all due respect, you have no right to come in between us and what is the most effective method of pain management for us. We do not need you to be the arbiter of what is good for us. We are making that decision for ourselves, and there is no valid proof that it should be otherwise. Please retract your false claims about kratom, and leave us be.

Thank you.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regulating Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 4:28:32 AM

Dear Doctor Gottlieb,

As a citizen on the United States of America with a relatively high sense of what is fair and just. I must question your statements regarding kratom. Are you trying to protect our interests as citizens? People just like you and I have gone down this route in regards to Marijuana. This plant, kratom, isn't ever on par with marijuana's level of cognitive impairment. If anything it's allowed me to fully tap into my potential like many others. I'm a firm believer in the fact that Kratom on its own has never taken any individual's life unless they have consumed enough plant matter to mess up their digestive tract. Kratom hasn't contributed to any deaths unless it was in combination with very potent painkillers that the FDA deemed safe 40 years prior. Have a mind of your own. Do your own research. Be respectable and make decisions for the good of this country. Regulation of kratom for those 21 and older is one thing. Putting regulations together regarding quality control is understandable as well. Deeming kratom medically useless when many other physicians have said the truth is quite the opposite of your statements. Make it your mission to crack down on a drug that will end opioid dependency if you want. Let your ties to big pharma be your legacy or rise above and be a man of values. I could be dead without kratom. That's a reality. Medically speaking it has saved hundreds of thousands more lives than it's taken. That type of simple math can't be argued with. It's recreational benefits are even worth looking into for the good of our economy. Be respected amongst your peers or take the quick check. Do me one favor. Try kratom before you slander its name. Put your faith into a kid that has a far more extensive knowledge on this topic than you. I don't mean to put you down. I want to like you. I want to admire you. I want you to save this country from being dependent on money hungry businesses selling suboxone. They charge people money to keep their lives while forcing you to go to 8 appointments a month miles away just to take away the freedom they promised with drugs of its nature. These drugs are far harder on the body and are more damaging to humanity's success than they help. It takes months to feel normal again after being on the ridiculous amounts of suboxone doctors prescribe these days. Having to survive months before getting your first appointment with a doctor who has the ability to prescribe it for its on-label purpose. Have you lived through that? If you had I feel we would be having a much different conversation. At its worst kratom is moderately recreational with barely any cognitive impairment being a great alternative to alcohol. At its best, this herb is a profound plant that enlightens many that have been on the verge of suicide by overdose, while helping depression, anxiety, pain and many others with little things down to diarrhea. The reasoning for this ban is clear. You're doing exactly what Thailand did in the mid-1900's. You're protecting the exact companies you swear to be against in the midst of this epidemic. If your children became addicted to heroin... What would you do? Give them methadone which lets them just get high still? Give them suboxone and get them stuck on it for the rest of their lives because the withdrawals are tenfold of that with normal opiates? I'd give mine kratom as a resource. That's how much I believe the plant is safe. I'll be fine either way, Sir. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions of others, will be affected by this severely. It's not even that fun. It's a means to an end, and that's all. Taking kratom away from us and taking our responsibility as our own people will tarnish our most basic rights as human beings and destroy the lives of many others at a steep rate. People will die as they turn back to opiates. Regulate it and tax it. Either way you'll make your money in the FDA. Please allow me to retain my right as a citizen of this great country to continue to grow as a human being as this is a pivotal point in my life. I will try my best either way but

letting this one fight go will allow me to reach my own goals and thrive. I hope you end up leaving this moment with a better grasp of the consequences that you may personally face through making this epidemic far worse without the aid of kratom. We are all beautiful people deep down. I wish you could witness the love and empathy I feel and spread to others on a daily basis. I'll save you the sob story about my personal story. I'm very understanding and can see your cause for concern. I need you to understand that we are in good hands as a community of our own and we can take care of ourselves. Thank you for your time, Commissioner.

If you have any questions, feel free to ask anything. Good morning, and have a great day.

Sincerely,

Mr. (b) (6) (age 23)

(Pretty good baseball player, well researched in medicine and chemistry in general, trying to go to school for biochemistry to grow my knowledge and establish meaning into my life. Great family and friends. Love for all people even those who remain ignorant. I think you're very bright. Please, prove me right. Let this stay course and let more research be conducted. This plant will prove to be your best weapon if you allow it to remain legal for adults and make it readily available as alcohol is. You will be the man who put the opiod crisis to a stop. With love Commish.)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: strongly opposed to FDA's nonfactual negative portrayal of kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 6:21:09 PM

Dear FDA,

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I am a disabled U.S. Army veteran who proudly served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Currently, I'm pursuing a BS, followed by a PhD, in Biology/Ecology.

I was severely disabled while serving in the military and have a multitude of medical conditions that required physician treatment via opiate medications for years. First, the VA prescribed me opiates to cope with disability-induced chronic pain. After following my doctor's instructions and taking these medications as directed for two years, I developed severe depression, insomnia, anxiety, a loss of personality, and a numbing of emotions, and a degenerative muscle condition.

Desperate for a remedy that didn't involve killing my body with Doctor prescribed poisons, I began to research alternative treatments and discovered kratom. Within one month of starting kratom, I was entirely off all my prescribed medications. Now, a year and a half later, I have made a monumental comeback – my symptoms are greatly reduced and my medical issues across the board are far more manageable. I have regained muscle mass lost through the degenerative condition the medications resulted in, and I am no longer an empty shell of a person. These "FDA approved medications" are toxic to the human body, I know this firsthand, you know this, and everyone who has been prescribed them for a length of time knows this. Taking away good hearted, honest, and hardworking American's right to treat their conditions in the way they find to be most helpful is a very malicious and ill willed endeavor. I urge you to look past corporate incentives, I am one of the many success stories with kratom, I am the walking, talking, and functioning testament to how false and blatantly incorrect the FDA's statements regarding kratom are. We are everywhere, all walks of life and all geographical locations, we are contributing members of society and we accomplish great things despite our medical issues because we made a responsible and well thought out decision to walk away from toxic and life destroying medications and opted for a much more subtle and innocent means of treatment.

This is why I am appalled that the FDA has made such outlandish claims against this plant while continuing to promote and encourage the medications that nearly destroyed my life, and did destroy my quality of life. As a responsible adult, I implore the FDA to retract its inflammatory statements and allow those who have had horrific experiences with doctor-prescribed medications to address their symptoms in the way they deem the most helpful and least harmful.

After a year and a half of daily use, I have not experienced a single negative side effect from consuming kratom, which is neither dangerous, nor harmful, nor without medical benefits. I understand companies are unhappy with people quitting their medications and seeking out natural, less harmful treatments. It lessens those companies' profit margins, such is life as they say in the Army. What I hope you understand, though, is that banning kratom will not give those companies back their lost revenues. Countless kratom users, including myself, have vowed that *we will not, under any circumstances, return to pharmaceuticals should kratom be taken away from us*. It is better to suffer immensely from medical issues than suffer immensely from the side effects of the drugs prescribed for those medical issues. These medications are unfathomably harmful, as innumerable testimonies show. It's both unnerving and heartbreaking to realize that the FDA – an entity charged with safeguarding the health of all Americans – is doing the opposite by actively seeking to harm consumers of an innocuous plant.

There is no uproar from the FDA over the countless deaths caused each year by doctor-prescribed pharmaceuticals. There is no uproar over liver-damaging acetaminophen or the many other dangerous FDA-approved drugs that Americans consume regularly, there is no uproar regarding the damage to quality of life myself and many others suffered at the hands of doctors. I risked my life for this country. I lived through nightmares that you couldn't imagine, and I did it with an American flag on my sleeve, and I did it in the name of freedom. Which is why I'm very disappointed that those same freedoms are under attack by the FDA at this very moment.

I hope the FDA can realize the attack on this herb is baseless and unjust. Not a single kratom consumer is concerned with the financial success of Big Pharma, which markets poisons as cures and harms people daily. We only care about our quality of life, which this herb has improved drastically. To me, this is not just an attack on an herb. It's an attack on my quality of life and the lives of all the hardworking Americans who realized that prescription medications were destroying them, even when taken as directed, it is an attack on and insult to the ability responsible adults have to make their own decisions like big boys and girls. I request the FDA retract their statement and allow citizens to address their health issues in the way that they see fit, and end this shameful war on natural remedies.

I am one of many kratom success stories. I am one of many voices telling you that kratom has no dangerous side effects. I should be free to live my life as a normal person again, despite my disabilities. I am a case study that debunks every false claim about this herb. #iamkratom

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Thank you Commissioner for your hard work....please read.
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 12:07:24 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

I wanted to take a moment to write you regarding a very controversial issue in your world currently.....Kratom.

Your recent health warning concerning the effects of Kratom and classifying it in the public eye as an opiate is troubling for many reasons.

As a physician, you must have seen the evidence from the reported "deaths" of Kratom users and are aware that other drugs were in their systems at the time. However, even if that was not the case, 15 deaths does not even compare to the number of deaths caused by the myriad of "legal" drugs/supplements...so the reasoning behind keeping Kratom from the public seems unfounded.

I know you have heard all the arguments from the pro-Kratom side. I also know that you don't have concrete evidence from multiple studies with longevity that Kratom is any more addictive than caffeine.

So here is my take on the matter. You are being persuaded by corporate entities that have a financial interest in keeping Kratom off the list of options for Americans. Perhaps you aren't even fully aware of it. You have to really look at WHO is providing the research you are reviewing to make your decision. Who is funding that research?

Many things get passed in government because of the benefit of corporations and not citizens. I am sure it was thought that this would be one of them.. however Kratom is loved by many people that know it is enhancing their lives in a positive way. You don't see homeless Kratom users hanging out on the street and begging. Families are not being destroyed by Kratom. Over 2,000 people are not dying every year from Kratom overdoses like they are from alcohol poisoning.

I fear that your job is on the line if you don't give in to the pressure...and that saddens me. Who am I to you? Nothing...just a faceless American that is asking you to do something that isn't in your best interest or your family's. That's a big ask. However when life is finished what are the things that really matter? Who does history remember?

You have to know in your heart that what you are doing is wrong and goes against what caused you to become a physician and a government official in the first place. To protect people. Who are you really protecting by making Kratom unavailable to the public?

Please, for the sake of the bigger picture, ask for unbiased research and explore both sides of the Kratom fight.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: The future of America
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 9:48:39 AM

Point Blank, this country will fall apart if it's citizens can not be trusted to vote on the Kratom issue. It's not American and points towards a nasty future as far as maintaining the country's integrity. Please look beyond the immediate needs and see what really matters.. Maintaining a free country. Let there be peace instead of death. Taking away kratom will not save lives. It will end them. My uncle passed away last year after the Veterans hospital cut his meds way down, kratom was the only thing keeping him alive. However, he couldn't access it for over a month due to fear of the ban, and while laying in his bed in pain(as he often times was),he passed away. (b) (6) is his name. The autopsy showed he had nothing in his system that he wasn't supposed to. His body just couldn't handle it. He was 50 and passed away a week after my grandpa(his father). My grandma still cannot wrap her head around it all. She's miserable. This is wrong. How can we possibly feel free with these kinds of bans happening? Why isn't everything out there consumable that could kill you, illegal? Is that what's next? Or is this just about the money in healthcare? When will the greed stop!? Please end this the best way you know how and be a HERO instead of a villain. None of this will be soon forgotten. Help us as fellow humans instead of using us for gains. Thank you for your time. I wish you the best in this short journey of life.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: The Truth....
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 9:23:44 PM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to adamantly disagree with your recent released in regards to the safety of kratom. For millennia, people in the Southeast Asian countries of mitragyna speciosa's origin have utilized the amazing properties in said leaf to function more efficiently and with less pain. It is a benign supplement that is one of nature's safest botanicals. You cannot take too much kratom, as a built in safe guard prevents such incidents by causing the body to expel any such attempt with regurgitation. The leaf itself is in the coffee family. As a supplement, the improvement I get for my debilitating fibromyalgia pain helps me be an active mother and wife, not to mention making it possible to bear the much milder pain remaining after consuming that's substance so that I can now hold a steady job for the first time in my 42 years on Earth. This is not a joke. I cannot be forced back on to pain management, where I'm given prescription drugs that addle my head and cause agonizing withdrawal when stopped abruptly. If I don't get medication, I experience pain of what degree makes like close to impossible to leave, while robbing me of any capacity to work a regular job. I'm asking you not to kill me. Nor thousands of other kratom advocates who count on their supplement of choice to be able to get out of bed each day. And let's not forget the thousands more alive today because of kratom's ability as a supplement to ease agonizing withdrawal from addiction to heroin and other deadly drugs when they decide to quit actively using. Your main concern should be for the American people as a whole, not allegiance to drug manufacturers and Big Pharma money. I'm not ready to die. I am my parent's only child. I've been with my husband almost 15 years. I've been a mother for almost 25 years, with my oldest son almost 25 years old, and my three boys with my husband are now 14, 10 and 4. Before discovering kratom two years or so ago, I was given prescriptions for oxycodone, the Butrans patch, Ativan, Lyrica (which caused sudden and scary weight gain) and tramadol (which caused withdrawals after four years of daily use that I can only call a nightmarish hell). One doctor decided to add the antidepressant Celexa with my tramadol use and I developed a horrifying incident resulting from serotonin Syndrome, due to those two drugs overloading my brain with way too much serotonin. My kids and husband were terrified when I suddenly didn't know my address, or the day of the week, and then collapsed and had a seizure (of which I've no memory). After an EKG, MRI and wearing a holter heart monitor for 24 hours it was determined their diagnosis to be serotonin Syndrome. Once I discontinued my Celexa prescription, all was well (until my tramadol would be discontinued due to that new classification of ultram as a CIV drug). No more seizures. This is my personal testimony, where I pray and hope and wait in terrified expectation of your actions going forward.

Finally, of all the deaths asserted to be caused by kratom, it's abundantly obvious that they were NOT caused by kratom ALONE. Adulterated kratom containing desmethyiltramadol was the actual cause in several deaths, in addition to the HUGE variety of other drugs found in the blood of most of the people who died with kratom in their system. Those substances included alcohol, marijuana (also safe), heroin, methamphetamine, and, of course, scores of dangerous prescription pills like oxycodone and alprazolam. Meanwhile, how many deaths happen every year in America from overdose of the cheap, widely available pain reliever acetaminophen (Tylenol)? How about tobacco products and alcohol? If we're supposed to believe you care about our safety, then suggest mitragyna speciosa be regulated as a supplement rather than lying about it's "danger," since it's NOT dangerous.

Lastly, I want you to consider the consequences if you succeed in banning kratom. You've already starting seizing overseas kratom shipments into America, which is an obscene abuse of power, since it's still LEGAL. And by continuing down this ill informed path, you'll be killing people like me, as well as destroying the sobriety of recovering addicts who've utilized kratom to overcome the pain and physical withdrawal of addiction cessation. We the People will fight back, just as we did against the DEA's ludicrous attempt to place kratom as a Schedule I substance. Understand this, please. If we lose this supplement, our blood is on your hands. Be prepared for a fight. And if I must die, it will be for the cause of freedom to treat the pain and illness within my body with natural remedies and NOT pharmaceutical drugs that line pockets while keeping the people lined up for more.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: thoughts on kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 9:36:24 PM

I am proof! Kratom saves people of all walks of life. It is safe, natural, not nearly as addictive as Pharmaceuticals, and a great way to treat a large number of diseases, both mentally, and physically. I have successfully treated bad alcoholism that I have been suffering from for 11 years. Kratom is NOT going to cause me to get multiple DUIs, it's not going to cause me to lose my liver, or my job. Kratom will not destroy my relationships. I have made great strides in my life thanks to this plant. I can now hold a job, I can hold a relationship together. Im not sitting in jail today from the "evil crimes kratom caused me to do." I have however spent days in jail thanks to a legal drug. Alcohol! Perfectly legal for anybody 21+. Guess what? Ethanol is poison. Ethanol kills hundreds of thousands. Ethanol causes death, destruction, and just an overall horrible life in general! Coffee, it is legal. The caffeine in coffee is considered a drug. And causes strokes, heart attacks, high blood pressure, and even stomach issues. Perfectly legal, for anybody. Even small children. Nicotine! Another legal drug is nicotine. Nicotine, or tobacco in general kills thousands upon thousands of people. Perfectly legal. Is kratom a cure all miracle herb? Absolutely not. But, it sure does help millions of people. A plant in the coffee family, under scrutiny only because it some what "tickles" certain opiod receptors. Withdrawal from Kratom for me is no worse then coffee. When I stop I feel fine. Kratom, once again for me, is no more intoxicating then a good cup of coffee. Once again, it is a close cousin to coffee. Why are we not banning coffee? This whole thing is mind boggling not only to me but millions of other people. People suffering from Depression. People suffering from Anxiety. People suffering from Addiction. People suffering from chronic pain. One of the arguments from your side is, and I quote "it has not been scientifically evaluated, There is no reputable evidence of anything good." WRONG. Firstly, there have definitely been studies. Secondly, We the people of this "great" country are the proof. Another false claim is "Kratom is leading to other addictions." WRONG. Kratom is leading AWAY, from addiction. Can I continue recovery without kratom? Absolutely, it might be a little rockier, but myself, and many others absolutely could. Especially considering many of us have either been there or we work in the recovery community for others. I myself am a chairman of my local home group Alcoholics Anonymous and I will tell you this, Taking action against Kratom, in the way your doing is wrong on many, many levels. Your attacking US citizens. You are directly causing problems with our wellbeing. Nothing good will come from scheduling it, and making synthetic compounds of the alkaloids in kratom besides lining the pockets of you, and your colleagues. And sending more money to big Pharma because it is seen as a threat to their prosperity when we as citizens decide to take advantage of a God given right by treating ourselves naturally and holistically. Nothing, good will come from banning it completely. This whole ordeal screams Corruption, greed, Fear tactics, and propaganda. This is unfair to the United States constitution. It is, unfair to us as citizens to have to deal with misinformation and lies. This is not the 1930s. We should be passed this! We, as a community have enough intelligence to realise this. I am not saying kratom is a miracle plant. Even though it seems like it. Im not saying it is without flaws. Afterall, what isnt? I am not trying to attack you or the FDA/DEA. What im trying to say is, and you know what this is truly about, if you have any room in your heart. If you even have a heart at all. If you truly care about the integrity, and overall well being of this great country, the country i grew up proud to be in, then you will LEAVE KRATOM ALONE. COMPLETELY JUST BACK OFF AND LEAVE US BE. If not, then I no longer truly know what this country even stands for anymore other then corruption. We have an army of support. Why must you start another war over our freedom? Im going to be doing alot of praying the next upcoming months. Not only for this country, and us as a community. But, also, im going to be praying that you can see the light in this nonsense. What right do you have to try and take something like this from us? None. Cut the madness.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Why is the FDA choosing big pharma over the American people?
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 10:50:20 PM

Sir,

My husband and I are 54 years old, hard working, responsible adults. Both of us have had significant injuries in our past that cause us a great deal of pain, most especially my husband. Before we learned about Kratom my husband was addicted to opioids. He was taking over 150 milligrams of Vicodin every day and the pain was still horrendous. Each and every day he needed more just to get through the day. Within 24 hours he was off of the pain medications and taking a purely NATURAL herb that has given me my husband back. Big Pharma has done nothing for us other than create addiction and dependence.

The argument is that Kratom is dangerous and addicting. ANYTHING can be addicting: caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, gambling, food.. the list goes on and on. The major majority of Kratom users are responsible adults and they use Kratom responsibly. This is all a power play on behalf of BIG PHARMA. Big Pharma cannot put a trademark on a plant, therefore there is no money to be made. No money for big pharma means that politicians don't get kick backs. That is what this is all about and We the People are sick and tired of these games.

Pharmaceuticals are DEADLY and kill millions of people every year, yet doctors hand it out like its candy. Kratom has never killed anyone. This plant comes from this earth and it has a purpose. You cannot take away our freedom of choice to treat ourselves with natural herbs!

This is AMERICA. We have rights. And we have the right to remove all of you crooked political hacks from positions of power and we will do so. You will not win this fight.

#IAMKRATOM

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You are deadly wrong! You should be removed for your stance on Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 3:27:26 PM

Sir,

I did not serve 20 years in the Navy for your freedom to hurt more humans! I am a business owner in (b) (6) and have been selling Kratom for about 3 years successfully. We are tackling the opioid epidemic! Not you, not your organization, not your approved methadone/suboxin... you do not get it!

You should have your license removed.

As you can tell I hate that you are so ignorant or have a hidden agenda in regards to Kratom and the official position you have that my taxes pay for.

Many persons have been fired for less.

So I ask, when will you be placed in jail for removing access to Kratom for all of our patrons? Who holds you accountable.

I demand you answer for your crimes against humanity!

How many drugs has your organization approved, including opiates, killed???

We have been helping people and continue to do so.

I wish that you no longer existed since you are ignorant and are harmful to human life.

Stop pushing some other agenda that pads your pocket.

All the deaths you speak of about Kratom being involved have all been debunked! They had other drugs in their system and some committed suicide... So tell me what deaths were solely attributed to Kratom. Don't even mention the cop that died with Kratom....from what I hear he was taking massive amounts and any person that takes massive amounts of a substance can die regardless of what it is.

Addiction...really....Kratom doesn't have those types of physical dependencies like all the approved meds you guys allow onto the market.

I challenge you to grow up, look at all the feedback from actual kratom consumers, then go jump off of a short pier! cause you don't belong to my human kind due to your abusive ignorance.

(b) (6)
ret/usn/corpsman

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Your statements on Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:23:18 PM

Hi, my name is (b) (6) I am from (b) (6), as someone who FREQUENTLY drinks Kratom at home for recreational purposes, I can tell you this: I travel a lot for my second job, sometimes a couple days, sometimes weeks, the idea that Kratom being addictive is laughable to say the least, as I don't even take Kratom with me during my travel, furthermore the 36 deaths you speak of never stated that they were caused by Kratom alone. Consenting adults will always find a way to get what they want, as they did during the prohibition. The FDA and the DEA are the number one source of crime in the US as you create these laws about what consenting adults cannot do, we are all adults here kindly leave Kratom alone please. Your propaganda isn't fooling anyone.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: About Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 6:40:04 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 27-year-old software engineer from (b) (6) and I'm writing today about kratom. I am troubled by the way the FDA and DEA are attempting to criminalize an herbal supplement I've found useful in relieving chronic back pain and even dental pain. There are thousands, possibly millions, of people who have found relief for various conditions in kratom, and I think it is premature to put a ban in place when the evidence of harm is tenuous at best.

I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease when I was 15 and have been hospitalized a half-dozen times. At one point, I was taking 60mg of hydrocodone (Vicodin) daily to control my pain. Corticosteroid therapy to control Crohn's weakened my bones, and I now suffer chronic back pain from three fractured vertebrae. For my back pain, my pain management doctor had me taking 30mg of hydrocodone daily. We tried alternatives like gabapentin which didn't help. Today I am able to control that pain with small doses of kratom powder and no longer require anything else.

Because of kratom, I am able to continue working and help to provide for my family and am no longer dependent on prescription painkillers for relief. If it is taken away, I will have to find a new pain management doctor willing to prescribe opioids, and due to other FDA actions this is getting nearly impossible, even for people like me who have a physical injury visible on an x-ray. I am worried about my ability to work without an alternative form of pain relief.

I know that you are only looking out for the best interests of Americans, but on this issue I fear you are mistaken, and your actions will do more harm than good. Please do not cut off access to an herbal supplement that has enabled me to live a normal life out of nothing but fear of ***possible*** danger.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Citizen for Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 6:17:02 PM

I am writing to the FDA to voice my strong opposition to the recent attack on the herb Kratom. I submitted public comments over a year ago along with 22,000 responsible Americans. I am a 32 year old healthcare professional and a kratom user. When used responsibly (like everything else) it is a safe alternative to pain medication to alleviate chronic pain from a back injury i acquired playing football. There has been great damage done by flooding the US market with opioids that has killed millions of americans. By going after safer remedies and plants, you will drive more people to heroin, opioids and death. Please focus on coming up with safer alternatives to managing pain instead of limiting individual choice. The recent manufactured hysteria over recent claims are misguided and heart breaking. Kratom is used by adults, veterans, teachers, single mothers and recovering opioid addicts who managed to not overdose. By attacking this herb (even if well intentioned) you will kill americans and worsen the pain epidemic facing this country. Surely there are bigger problems facing the FDA than this. Please reconsider your position and help the people of this country.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Concerning the Legal Status of Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 6:53:15 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is (b) (6). I am a 38 year old male who uses Kratom. It has come to my attention that there are parties with an interest in making Kratom illegal in the United States. I would have to strongly disagree with their intentions, as in my personal experience there is no reason to make this natural pain reliever illegal. It is no more or less dangerous than anything else that is legally available for our consumption. It can be used daily without the harsh side-effects typically associated with over the counter medications, such as acetametaphine, or legal "drugs" such as alcohol. I actually used Kratom to aid me through alcohol withdrawals, as alcohol had destroyed my life and body. Alcoholism was a disease I dealt with from the age of 27 up until last July when I took Kratom in the place of alcohol. The alcohol companies need not worry about losing profits, a person quits alcohol when they are ready and they are generally ready when their body literally tells them to stop. This is also true of legally obtainable opiates, such as Hydrocodone. The use of Kratom has not prevented me from using alcohol entirely. I still partake of a 6-pack of fine beer once a month and do so out of choice. The Kratom merely helped me survive the initial withdrawal period, which lasted 2 weeks. Without the help of Kratom, it was very possible I could of died while quitting alcohol "cold turkey", as they say. That, or had been so shakey I would not of been able to be a functional participant in this society.

Kratom has positive side effects that outnumber the negative ones. Negative side effects include nausea and anxiety if taken at a dose that is too strong for a person. This is true of most legal drugs, in case you haven't noticed. Addiction potential exists with Kratom, but it does not have such a strong as a hold on your mind the way that alcohol, tobacco, and opiates do. Postitive attributes include being anti-inflammatory, an energy booster, an anti-depressant, a muscle relaxer, good for fighting withdrawal symptoms caused by other substances, no 'hangover' feeling after use, and potential motivator for some in the same way we regard the morning cup of coffee. You can function while consuming Kratom throughout the day. It does very little by means of impairment if proper dosage is used, so a person can do their job or drive a car if need be. Nobody is going to take Kratom then accidentally shoot their child, that is something alcohol impaired persons would do.

Furthermore, by whom's authority should we ever allow dictation over what we choose to put into our bodies? If we have democracy, then it is by personal authority we make these decisions. It was up to me to choose

to start drinking alcohol as it was up to me to quit. We should have no limit of choice in what we put into our bodies. We will never come to the full understanding of any substance if we eliminate the ability to choose. Even if illegal, people will find a way to obtain the things they want, so why bother?

Please help keep Kratom legal. May as well make all substances legal while we are at it. There is plenty of legal poison in most products anyway to kill us all. We may as well be able to enjoy life in the process. Besides, making anything legal is good for the economy. It will make people go out and empty their pockets for it. See what legalizing Marijuana did for Colorado? We could have that everywhere. I am sure Kratom would have a similar success rate.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

PS: Might as well remove any harmful chemicals from our food. Most people choose to eat garbage anyway. Even without the harmful chemicals added, most popular foods people choose to eat will put them right in the hospital, given time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: How Kratom has changed my life for the better
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:21:34 AM

Hello, my name is (b) (6), I am 27 years old and I am from the small town of (b) (6). I am a small business owner also. I am writing you today to clearly state my strong support for the all natural and Safe plant Kratom. I came in contact with this amazing healing plant about 5 years ago, I had heard about it from a close friend. They told me about how it was a natural pain reliever and great for mood and energy. At the time I was prescribed and taking Adderall for my ADHD. I was experiencing horrible side effects from this prescribed drug, also the start of an addiction. I was looking, praying for a natural alternative! With a skeptical mind I ended up trying kratom and fell in love! In one month I was off the Adderall and only using kratom on an as needed basis. My natural energy was restored and my mood had improved! I was so happy to have discovered this gem.

Kratom to me is a gift from God. It is non toxic to humans and so safe to take regularly. An all natural pain reliever and it also helps people coming off of hard opiate or heroin use, which is such a beautiful thing! Kratom is a Safe alternative to Pharmaceutical Drugs and has so many benefits. It has changed my life for the better and I fear that if the FDA decides to ban this gem alot more people will die due to the high use of opiates and heroin in this country. We are humans and we have rights, my quality of life is just as important as my neighbors.

Thank you for your time and service to the State!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I am a Kratom success story.
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 2:58:08 PM

Hi, my name is (b) (6) and I am a 37 year old stay at home mom with 3 boys. I am married to a truck driver and we (b) (6).

I am writing in SUPPORT of Kratom and how it has POSITIVELY changed my life for the BETTER. The FDA's smear campaign recently about Kratom really struck a nerve with me, when it has been nothing, but a blessing. Not only for me, but my husband and children's lives.

I was an opiate addict for 15+ years and I almost lost my marriage to it UNTIL I discovered Kratom. I have tried many inpatient rehab's, detox's, and suboxone throughout the years and I could NEVER STAY clean. I always relapsed somehow. Kratom has been the ONLY method that has truly worked for me. I have not relapsed on any type of drug AT ALL since I discovered Kratom. I have been clean now for longer than a year thanks to Kratom. There was a time I couldn't get 24 hours clean. My kids have a mom and my husband has a wife and not just any, but a great one. I got my life back. It has been a success in my life and I am afraid if kratom is banned in the U.S. then what will happen to me? My kids and marriage? What will my future be like?

Kratom has been the only method I've used that I've been successful and I don't crave drugs or opiates. I'm afraid that the FDA banning kratom is going to lead me straight back to abusing drugs again. Please don't take away this amazing plant from my life. I have everything now.

Banning kratom will ultimately send a massive amount of people back to the streets to relapse on drugs. Only making the opiate epidemic FAR worse than it is. This ban would do more harm than good. I finally have my life back and not gripped to a life of despair and it unfairly may be taken away.

The truth about Kratom is that it is an amazing plant and it has saved my life!! Kratom has been the ONLY method that has worked and I've been clean for more than a year now. Kratom saved my life and marriage.

Please reconsider the ban on Kratom and allow us responsible citizens to continue to live our wonderful lives.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: in support of keeping kratom legal and accessible to the American public
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:17:28 PM

Hello,

I am a 40 year program coordinator for a local college, and I'm contacting you in hopes to have my voice and story heard with why I am strongly against the current campaign by the FDA against kratom. Kratom has safely aided my battle with severe anxiety and depression and has helped numerous others, including acting as a safe alternative to pain medication without respiratory depression (the main cause of death in opiate-related overdoses.)

I have been struggling with severe depression and anxiety for most of my adult life, but was made far worse when my father took his own life 3 years ago. Around that time, my depression and anxiety became highly debilitating and seemingly insurmountable. I had trouble sleeping, connecting with my family and loved ones, socializing, and holding a job. At one point I considered suicide.

After researching herbal and healthier alternatives to prescription medication, I discovered the supplement kratom. Kratom has helped me manage my depression and anxiety, helped me regain focus and motivation, and helped me get my life back. In the three years I have incorporated kratom into my life I have never felt impaired or under the influence. I have never gotten sick or felt unwell because of it. Kratom has helped me in the same sense that chamomile tea has helped me rest, caffeine has helped me wake up, or St. John's Wort has helped me balance my mood. I see no reason why kratom should be banned or withheld through blockade of import. Nor should kratom be made unavailable as a safe alternative to prescription medications.

There are millions of Americans like me and numerous studies and scientific findings that support kratom. Some of these findings can be found here: <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Information Regarding Kratom-Related Deaths
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 6:57:34 PM

Mr. Gottlieb,

I was hoping that you could provide me with more information regarding the 36 Kratom-related deaths that the FDA has recently become aware of. I find the latest stories on Kratom-related deaths very interesting, and would like to read more about each of the 36 specific cases for my own personal edification. As a fellow American citizen, as are you, I am sure that you can appreciate and respect those who wish to educate themselves about the risks of Kratom. Since the FDA has continuously stated that there have been 36 Kratom-related deaths, the organization clearly has knowledge of said deaths via public records.

I am asking that the information surrounding each death be sent to me, so that I may also analyze the information for myself. Since death certificate documents are public record, I am confident that this is a reasonable request that will be no problem for you, or the FDA as a whole, to provide me with said documents.

I look forward to speaking with you soon, and thank you for your time

Best,
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 8:08:18 PM

My name is (b) (6), I am a 35-year-old wife and mother from (b) (6). I am very concerned with Kratom becoming illegal. I have been suffering with severe anxiety for about 15 years. I've been prescribed a number of different medications to treat my anxiety over the years, mostly benzodiazepine medications. These pills had undesirable side effects for me and also are very addictive and very dangerous. About five years ago a friend with a similar medical condition to mine introduced me to Kratom. It did wonders for my anxiety with no horrible side effects or risk of addiction or overdose. Since I was introduced to Kratom my anxiety has been under control and my life is so much better. I have less panic attacks, I am more social and active and I'm a better mother and wife. The thought of not having access to this plant and having to resort to dangerous pharmaceuticals again scares me.

I'm very confused why kratom would even be considered dangerous. If alcohol is legal, a substance that kills almost 90,000 people a year and can be fatal to withdraw from I don't understand how a plant like Kratom can be outlawed. I know it would be detrimental to so many people who rely on this plant if they were denied access to it.

I really appreciate you taking the time to read my story. I will be happy to go into more detail if someone would like to contact me.

Thank you for listening,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 8:45:58 PM

Hello, My name is (b) (6), I am 30 years old and am contacting you to show my support for kratom, a safe and natural alternative to deadly medications such as opiates. Although I do agree there should be awareness of the plant I do not agree with the accusations of it adding to the opoid crisis or being dangerous, if anything it is helping many who would otherwise be taking deadly drugs like heroine or prescription opiates that cause respiratory depression which is the number one factor in opoid related deaths. Kratom has be shown not cause this.

This is a natural plant what helps too many people. Taking it away Is unjust and will cause rise in the opoid epidemic.. I know this because it has helped me to abstain from illegal opiates and make a life for myself.. This plant gives people what they need to be a productive member of society. Making it illegal will keep us from finding out about the many other benefit it can have, and push people like me to obtain there remedie illegally causing a rise in crime as well. Kratom has giving many people there lives back, mine included.

With my experience street and pharmaceutical drugs they cause more harm then good and are extremely addicting.. although kratom has the ability to spark dependence, it is about as addictive as coffee. And doe not come close to the drugs that kratom saved me from.

I Ask for more accurate research to be done and for you to really look at the benefits that are not possible when the plant is illegalized. It would be a huge mistake to take this plant away from people.

Thank you for your time and I hope you reconsider you stance on this harmless medicine..

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keeping Kratom legal
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:40:51 PM
Attachments: [9ba5da_64ffca75fd0543b4b42da9e029e2ea76.pdf](#)

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 43 year old father of two, business owner and cook. I wanted to write and let the FDA know how Kratom helped give me a live worth living after a debilitating knee injury and 20 year opiate habit. After years of depression from not being able to ween myself off methadone I discovered an article by a doctor suggesting that using Kratom in the first weeks of coming off methadone would drastically help withdrawal. It was a miracle in my eyes and I am now free from everything because Kratom was easily available. Please reconsider your stance so that Kratom can help others like it did me.

KRATOM BY THE NUMBERS

26,000 AMERICANS

have asked President Trump to keep kratom legal.

A 2016 petition supporting kratom attracted more than

142,000 SIGNERS

from the U.S.



99.1%

OF 23,000+ COMMENTERS

to the DEA in late 2016
opposed a kratom ban.

1,175 doctors, vets,
scientists & law officers
told the DEA they
don't want a kratom ban.



A BIPARTISAN
62 U.S. HOUSE & SENATE MEMBERS

asked the DEA not to proceed
with a ban on kratom.



0%

OF EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE
PROFESSIONALS/EMTs

responding to an online survey
supported a ban on kratom.



Kratom consumers report that the
botanical supplement is used for
many things including

MINOR PAIN AND TO
PROMOTE A SENSE
OF HEALTH &
WELL-BEING.



ZERO DEATHS

have been
proven to be
caused by
kratom.



One of the world's leading experts on drug
abuse and addiction says kratom has
NO MORE POTENTIAL FOR "SUBSTANCE
USE DISORDER" THAN CAFFEINE ...

Chamomile, St. John's Wort, and nutmeg are dietary
supplements that are comparable to kratom in terms
of the potential for addiction. There is no basis for
classifying kratom like heroin or LSD.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom (mitragyna speciosa)
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:20:13 PM

Commissioner,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being, and I urge you to reconsider your stance on the issue. I implore you to look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have, and continue to use kratom for its benefits.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:21:15 PM

Mr. Gottlieb,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of Kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use Kratom for its benefits. I am a 27 year old woman that suffers from Endometriosis. At the age of 24, I had a complete hysterectomy. I have had a total of 7 surgeries because of this disease. Kratom changed my life. I was able to get off prescription pain medications and use this herbal supplement. My doctor who oversees my treatment knew about my use of Kratom and supported it when I told him I was no longer needing pain medication. I can proudly say that since taking Kratom, I have not needed prescription pain medications. My worst fear was being dependent on pain medications at such a young age. I am an educator who contributes to society and have never used, or plan to use, anything that is considered an illegal substance. I have family members who were addicted to pain medications and in my opinion, that type of addiction is no different than those who are addicted to illegal drugs. I pray that you take the time and listen to our testimonies and read the science behind, what I believe to be, a life changing herbal supplement.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 5:55:34 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this email I'm response to the FDA latest statement about kratom being dangerous to Americans. I find appalling that an agency such as yours will make such a statement without having the research to back it up. You state that you are trying to protect America and yet what you are doing is pushing Americans towards opioids. I was in a severe car wreck in 2003, which has given me a back any injury that I was having to take pain medication for. It seems that I was becoming immune or the medications were becoming less effective year after year and my dosage kept having to be increased year after year, And even though I did not want to increase my medications it was necessary due to the fact that I work 10 to 12 hours A-day. It is only because of kratom that I have been able to reduce my pain medication to almost nothing And still be able to work and have a full life. I am sure that if you listen to any of the stories from people that use kratom instead of opioid medication you will find that the benefits far outweigh the negatives. If you are really trying to help the American public, you would make alcohol illegal because that is the one and only true drug that can kill you not only if you use in excess but also in withdrawals and Yet it is still readily available at most gas stations walmarts and even Walgreens. I hope you will take the time to actually read this and the other emails that you will to receive and rethink your decision on banning this!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 6:30:09 PM

Hello Scott Gottlieb M.D.,

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 59 -year old.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was under a doctors care for a back injury. I have chronic back pain. The doctor prescribed me opiates & morphine. I was on this protocol for 4 years. The drugs were causing other problems, so I had to get off the drugs. Long story short, I had to go cold turkey to get off the drugs. It took me a year to get normal with the help of Kratom. I use Kratom on a daily basis for pain management.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 9:14:36 PM

I am a 35 yo preschool teacher and my brother is an ex heroin addict truck driver. Kratom has given him his life back. He was leashed to one area and beyond broke using the methadone program. Why must we force him back into hard drugs?

I am a responsible adult who uses Kratom. I don't drink or smoke or use drugs, but Kratom helps me with my social anxiety that i have struggled

With my whole life. Please reconsider your stance in support of kratom. Check the science and as the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits. It is a safe way to put an end to this heroin epidemic that is killing so many. I see a light at the end of the tunnel. Help us.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 9:56:03 PM

I am a 61 year old woman that has used kratom for 17 months.

I was on heavy pain medication for 3 years before I had a very successful fusion and fixation on my back from my sacrum to the T9, 6 year ago.

I believe the pain medication I was on before my surgery would have killed me if I had continued much longer. I have been pain free in that part of my back since surgery.

Now it is time to have the cervical spine fused. At my age such a large surgery is more risky. I am able to control the pain with therapy and kratom. I do not want to go back into pain management.

It also allows me to be able to live a normal life. I am able to work 30 hours a week, enjoy my grandson, my grandson has severe autism and needs more attention and care than most 7 years olds, I like to go to the gym and do other things I enjoy.. Without the gym workout i lose muscle strength and lung capacity. Without kratom I might need to go on disability and lose a lot of income and be a burden on the tax payers. I can't do this if I am in pain.

It also helps me to be a little more out going at work which is a big bonus since I am an apartment manager and also lease apartments.

Please do not take kratom from the 3 million plus users.

Many have and are using kratom to stay off hard drugs, even addictive drugs that their own doctors placed them on to treat another addictions.

America is the freest country in the world. We deserve the right to say it what we place in our bodies.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:31:07 PM

I was addicted to heroin and pain pills since I was 15, been to rehab 4 times, tried Suboxone Subutex and naltroxone to curb my craving for the opiates and they did not work. I'm now 25 with 3 years clean, my own business, a home, and a family of my own and I owe it all to kratom it's been the only thing that kicks my cravings for opiates. I take kratom everyday and I have been taking it for the last 3 years and I choose to take it because it's a better alternative to Suboxone and Vivitrol, it's all natural, non-addictive, and actually works. If kratom is banned you're basically telling the recovery community that you'd rather push more pills and profit than see them recover and lead a normal, happy, successful life. I urge you to think about the people who have been helped by this miracle plant before you make the wrong decision.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 12:31:21 AM

Hi! My name is (b) (6) and I can't stay silent any longer. I'm a wife, mother and a X-ray technologist. I've been suffering from, Willis -Ekbom Disease for 13 years. Ive taken most every medication used to treat this dreadful disease. Three months ago my medication, (mirapex) stopped working. It's a common thing with this disease to have augmentation to dopamine agonist drugs. There were no others medications that worked for me so in my despair and after much pain and many sleepless nights I searched for alternative treatments and that's when I discovered kratom. To my surprise it worked almost instantly. I did some research on the product and feel that it has less side effects than the drugs that I had been taking over 12 years. Im confident that I'm purchasing it from a safe online vendor, which also came with research.

Had I not found kratom I know I would have lost my job. After being awake in pain most nights I now sleep again. I no longer feel sleep deprived and can carry on with my life.

I beg you to please reconsider your thoughts on banning something that is helping so many people.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 2:27:11 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 31 year old student from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I discovered kratom by happy accident at a smoke shop where I bought CBD supplements to help with my **chronic pain and general anxiety disorder**. I don't like to take pharmaceuticals as I have a substance abuse problem but have found CBD doesn't effect me in the same way. The vendor suggested I try kratom as other customers use it for similar reasons and I figured I'd take a package and read up on it when I got home.

The next few days I read up online through what I consider to be reliable sources about dosage guidelines, side effects and most importantly the experiences of others with kratom. I decided to try it.

I had been struggling in school and with other aspects of my life and couldn't seem to find balance within myself. **After taking kratom I felt clear headed, the pain I experience daily from an accident I had at 22 was dulled and my anxiety gone.** I have been able to function like a normal person. Able to experience social gatherings without becoming overwhelmed, able to clean my home without extreme pain during and afterward (sometimes lasting days, leaving me bed ridden,) and **able to focus on and complete my studies.**

There is inherent danger with any substance but if I compare my risk of addiction and deadly overdose with something from a pharmacy to that with kratom, kratom wins, no contest. I cannot abuse kratom. If I take too much I throw up. I can't seem to build a tolerance beyond the recommended dosage and do not feel a need to do so.

I don't want to increase my dosage of kratom like I did with other medications I'd been prescribed.

I have read and heard so many stories about how kratom has helped save the lives of those addicted to opioids and heroin.

Considering the current epidemic facing our country a ban is the worst possible move to make. So many lives will be lost because people with addictions will turn to heroin or even simply back to their opioids and suffer fatal overdoses. **Kratom is a blessing**, not a risk.

I have been able to live without the need for paxil, klonopin, Xanax, Vicodin, oxycotin, and many other pain medications my doctor had been trying for me. I believe kratom has only helped me.

With kratom I have been able to get my life back. I feel like a functioning human in society, not a doped up experiment.

For me and the others like me consider continuing to allow kratom in the USA.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opioid epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 6:44:29 AM

I am writing to you in regards to your recent announcements about kratom. There is currently an overwhelming amount of anecdotal evidence that kratom is assisting people with getting off of opiates. This plant could and most likely already has saved thousands of lives. If this plant is taken off the market, i truly believe the number of opiate related deaths will go up because people will not have access to this amazing plant. I was an opiate addict for ten years. I was homeless and job less. The day I found this kratom was the last day I touched an opiate. Now I am a social worker, I completed my bachelors degree, I am married with a wonderful daughter and am living in a house of our own. I had tried every method available to stop using opiates. None worked. There are countless stories like mine. And though I cannot say for certain why this plant helps people. I know for certain it does. So please, do not restrict peoples access to it.

From: (b) (6)
To: s.gottlieb@fda.hhs.gov; sgottlieb@fda.hhs.gov; [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:41:56 AM

Mr. Gottlieb,
I guessed your email address, as it is not readily available. I am hopeful you will get and read my message below.
Thank you, Karen Quinn

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: (b) (6)
To: "sgottlieb@fda.gov" <sgottlieb@fda.gov>
Sent: Mon, Nov 20, 2017 at 4:49 PM
Subject: Kratom

Mr Gottlieb,
I read with alarm your inaccurate statements on kratom.
I use kratom and get good relief from my joint pain. I no longer need opiates, which had been the only option. As a result I no longer suffer from the dizziness, dry mouth, gastric pain and other issues that opiates always brought.
I urge you to use science and rational thought in this issue, and avoid the hysteria and ignorance which is surrounding you from the DEA and others.
I hope you are never exposed to the horrible outcomes of opiates for yourself or your family. We need good and safe options, and kratom is one of those.
Please feel free to contact me if you wish. Thank you.

(b) (6)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:22:28 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is (b) (6). I am 32 years old and live in (b) (6). I've been using kratom for almost a year now. I suffer from chronic pain from a herniated disc in my lower back. I was originally on multiple medications such as muscle relaxers, anti inflammatory medication, and tramadol for pain. While on these medications I still had pain and every day was miserable. I work in Healthcare so I'm on my feet 12 hours a day helping save lives. Once I started using kratom it helped with my pain and well being greatly. I now take a small amount of kratom in the morning and evening to help. Kratom has done wonders for myself and countless others. I'm asking you to look at the facts and science behind its benefits and keep it legal. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:54:12 AM

Hello, I want to inform you that I think it is imperative to keep Kratom legal. I am a 45 year old healthcare with degenerative Arthritis in my spine. Kratom has allowed me to cut back on narcotics by over fifty percent. I only buy the product from companies that perform lab testing for purity. While I know there are unscrupulous vendors, most are very careful in selling only lab tested products. There have been no deaths from people who buy quality, unadulterated products, and it has been shown to be no more addictive than caffeine, to which it is closely related. I would have no issue with making Kratom extracts illegal, but the pure herb should be allowed to be sold, especially in light of the opium epidemic. This herb can very effectively and safely reduce people's dependence on opiates.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 12:21:34 PM

My name is (b) (6), and I am 56 years old. I am a responsible user of kratom for the last 5 years. In 2005 a doctor accidentally infused hydrogen peroxide into my peritoneal cavity during a procedure. It burned all my internal organs. My colon stopped working and ileostomy needed to be placed. My small intestine stopped working also. I lost lots of weight, could not eat and suffered from chronic abdominal pain and malnutrition. I could not work my job anymore. The strong pain medication caused side effects that I could not tolerate. I became aware of Kratom and used it responsibly over the last 5 years. I have been able to return to work. I also am able to eat and I have returned to become a normal productive person in society. I do not have withdrawal symptoms and have never gotten sick from it. If this kratom plant is banned I fear that I will not be able to continue to make the progress I have in my life. Millions of people who rely on the this plant will not be able to maintain the progress they have made. What other options for pain control do you have? People are dying daily from the opiod crises. This plant also has helped many people get off of dangerous pain medications and other street drugs. They too have been able to resume normal lives. Please re-consider this decision and study the information from the scientists and doctors that have analyzed and reviewed this plant. You have been provided with the factor 8 analysis information as well as reviews of the deaths that you claim were caused by Kratom. Please review this information and reconsider the decision to put out false information about this plant. If you are not in a situation with a health problem of your own you will not be able to relate to the struggles of those who rely on this plant to be a normal functioning member of society. Please read the Iamkratom testimonials from those who have been helped by this plant. Thank you for reading this.

This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
<https://www.avast.com/antivirus>

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 1:16:25 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 29 year old nurse, wife and mother from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions (that is also providing a safe and natural alternative to our nations opioid epidemic) on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I began using Kratom approximately one year ago for chronic pain, depression and anxiety. I suffer from daily, debilitating chronic pain due to a herniated disc with nerve impingement in my lumbar/sacral spine. Surgeons are hesitant to operate because of my age and doctors are hesitant to continue prescribing opiates to help control my chronic pain. This led me to - Kratom. A safe, natural alternative that treats my pain, depression and anxiety with absolutely no side effects to date.

Because of Kratom, I have more life within me than I have in the past six years. I am able to work full-time, take care of my daughter and provide for my family - all with a clear head and happiness in my heart.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues. Kratom has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own downward spiral. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 1:57:53 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 25-year old (b) (6), college graduate, and Ulcerative Colitis patient from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I first learned about Kratom and its multitude of benefits online, specifically about its potential to fight depression.

I suffer from a chronic digestive illness called Ulcerative Colitis. It is a form of Inflammatory Bowel disease similar to Crohn's Disease. While I take prescription medication to directly treat the inflammation, it is even more important for me to eat healthy foods, exercise regularly, and generally lead a healthy, wholesome life to stop the inflammation from forming in the first place. Due to my disease, I regularly experience depression, which makes it very hard for me to stick to a good diet and a solid exercise regime. In the same way that coffee helps so many Americans stay focused and productive, kratom helps me stay focused and productive by helping me stay positive and avoid the ennui caused by depression. I hope one day to no longer be reliant on prescription drugs that cost thousands of dollars every month. I cannot see myself ever reaching that day without the relief that kratom provides.

I believe that everyone who suffers from addiction, depression, or chronic illness should be able to have access to safe and natural plants like kratom. At the worst, I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 2:48:41 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm from (b) (6)

Kratom has saved the lives of my waif and i with extreme serious anxiety that nothing else could control or help with she is 27 Im 26 we have tried many different things and Kratom is a life saver literally because it actually works we do not abuse the amazing plant and it is meant for the people to be able to use, this is not fair to the public the big Pharma companies DEA and FDA feel the need to take it from us give us the right to what is right. This plant is not dangerous in any way compared to crap issued by the Big Pharma companies this plant is an all in one use it can help with just about everything including depression Kratom is NOT a drug and should NOT be thought of NOR labeled as one thats not right the one thing people have that is helping, the crap administrations are trying to takeaway for the benefit of lining the pockets of the pharmaceutical garbage companies. Kratom is amazing, safe, and will only help people. It needs to stay legal to the public.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 3:49:57 PM

I'm a 46 yr old female & I use a safe herbal supplement called Kratom, I started using it in 2014 after I lost my sister to a pharmaceutical overdose, my anxiety was terrible & I also had back surgery that year ; my family was very worried about me taking pharmaceutical pain medications, so an herbalist DR introduced me to this natural plant, it has helped me so much, along with therapy. I have NEVER felt addicted to it or have I ever had any side effects that pharmaceutical meds did to me. PLEASE research this more with an open mind & not about the money. This natural supplement is very safe & affective for millions of people. America is about freedom to choose & I voted to make America Great again. If you take this away from people, there will be even more deaths, like my sister.

Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 3:52:11 PM

Dear Sir,

I am writing in regards to Kratom. My daughter has been using this for two and a half years. She is bipolar, and it has helped her function. She is able to get up and go to work everyday. It truly is a blessing, since she is 51 years old and I have been taking care of her off and on, which seems like forever. I will tell you she also hardly ever drinks alcohol anymore. People like her seem to try and self-medicate to try to help themselves.

I hope for the sake of many people, this product can stay on the market. I understand some people have died, but they obviously took too much or were unaware of proper dosages. My daughter sees a psychiatrist periodically, also takes abilify. These products together help her.

Kratom, like any other product has to be taken in moderation.

Thank you for reading this,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 5:11:59 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 31 year old female from (b) (6). I would like to voice my concern about the recent, and unsubstantiated, attack the FDA made on kratom. Let me begin by telling you a little bit about the kratom community. Kratom helps people from all walks of life. People living with chronic pain and/or battling depression and anxiety, able to live functional and happy lives since discovering kratom. Americas heroes, Veterans, that use kratom to combat their unbearable symptoms of PTSD. A disorder in which they acquired while fighting for our freedom, mind you. Recovering addicts who have since bettered themselves and remained clean, thanks to kratom. Thousands of people whose quality of life has improved drastically because of kratom. Those people make up this incredibly kind, helpful and thoughtful community. The thought of this plant suddenly being unavailable to them is heartbreaking and so frightening. Frightening, not only on my behalf, but I'm also frightened for the wonderful people in the kratom community whose lives would be greatly diminished, if not destroyed, without access to this herb. I plead to you, reconsider and continue your education by speaking with the scientists who have been studying kratom and its effects for many years. We are not glassy eyed drug addicts utilizing this plant for some kind of high. We are everyday people, from all walks of life. Who, due to some unfortunate circumstances, have an ailment or imbalance that this plant helps to ease, in order to feel a sort of normalcy again.

First and foremost, I would like to thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for taking the time to read my story, my testimonial. My reason for advocating for kratom. I was in a near fatal car accident in 2012. I broke both legs, my arm... actually, it would probably be easier just to tell you what I didn't injure haha. Let's just say that the fact that I'm alive today is nothing short of a miracle. After the accident, I had countless corrective surgeries within the following two-year span, and eventually they began to wean me off of the pain medication, that I had been on for 2 years straight. Not only was I mentally and physically addicted at the point, I also began to feel the intensity of the pain I would likely have to endure for my rest of my life. Knee issues from fracturing both. Persistent ankle stiffness from completely crushing it. Back problems resulting from that crushed ankle which caused inversion of my foot, throwing my alignment off. Not to mention, that extra pressure on my poor little pinky toe isn't exactly a walk in the park either. Or in my case, a gimp in the park. Plus, healed bones just hurt sometimes. Arthritis, I'm assuming. I was miserable. I was desperate for relief and began to search the streets for that relief, so to speak. As those painkillers were becoming harder to find, as well as, much too expensive for me to continue to seek (being as I was still unable to return to my bartending job). Plus, I knew in my heart that I was meant for so much more than living the life of a junkie. I began searching online for a more natural solution to my chronic pain. There had to be something out there to, at least, ease the agony of my relentless pain. Eventually, I discovered kratom and ordered some immediately. After my first dose of kratom, I felt normal again. I felt like I did before the car accident. Not high, but elated that I was finally pain free, without the assistance of a painkiller. Not only that, I'd never felt more motivated and inspired to better myself in my life. It was then, finally pain free, I realized potential in this life. I realized that I needed to be so much more than I was, be so much more than I had ever aspired to be. I needed to find the silver lining in this difficult situation. The car accident made me see how short life is. Then, kratom easing the chronic pain that resulted from the car accident, was

the last obstacle that was holding me back from doing something meaningful with my life. I started to have a positive outlook on life. I was optimistic about the future. Since I began utilizing kratom, I went back to school. I am currently applying for the surgical technician program at a nearby community college, that begins next summer. I wanted to go into the medical field because it's so fascinating to me. Also, because I want nothing more in life than to help people, change atleast one person's life for the better. I also work 2 part time jobs, on top of furthering my education. Last spring, I had the honor of being accepted into the (b) (6)

I honestly shudder to think of where I would be in life had I never discovered kratom. The life I lead today, all of my accomplishments, I can say, without a doubt, would not have been possible without kratom. Does that sound like a dangerous drug? No, no it does not. Do these words even remotely resemble that of an active addict? Quite the opposite, actually. There are countless stories, just like mine, of people bettering themselves thanks to the relief they've found from kratom. They are able to function again. I know the personalities of drug addicts. Addiction causes a very selfish mindset. The kratom community is the most giving and caring group I have ever been a part of or even witnessed. Complete strangers, helping eachother. The polar opposite of addict behavior. It truly feels just like a really large family. We celebrate eachothers accomplishments. Comfort eachother in failures. Support eachother in hard times.

If my words didn't touch you enough to persuade your current opinion, I ask that you take another look at the science behind kratom. The most important thing to learn, kratom does not cause respiratory depression. Respiratory depression is the cause of death in opiate overdose. Not 1 death has ever been linked to kratom alone. Statistically speaking, that sounds safer than even water. Last, but certainly not least, science is also learning that kratom has a very low potential for abuse and is very unlikely to cause addiction.

I wouldn't be here today if not for kratom. I wouldn't have such a drive in life to learn and to help people. To be honest, I'm not sure I would even be alive today if not for kratom. At the very least, I can almost guarantee I'd still be seeking pain medication illegally. It's also very likely that I would have eventually turned to heroin. I wouldn't be in school. I wouldn't be the compassionate, selfless, giving person that I am today. I would be stuck in that selfish addict mentality, wandering aimlessly through life making no substantial contribution to the world. That alternative scenario might seem a bit dramatic and far-fetched, but I promise you, it's not. I was heading in that very direction before kratom. Kratom is an effective and safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs. In some cases, the safest alternative. I mean, I was an unmotivated, self-centered mess on prescription pain medication. Now, I'm the best that I have ever been. I am living proof of kratoms ability.

Again, thank you for your time. Please reconsider your stance on this plant. Banning kratom will most definitely be fatal. Whether it be by recovered addicts turning back to pills and heroin, and overdosing. Or Veterans and chronic pain patients, once without kratom, perceiving that the only way to end their physical or mental pain would be to end their lives. Again, that alternative scenario is also not at all far fetched. As someone who is a part of the kratom community, those are two scenarios that would unfortunately happen following the outlawing of this plant. Given that this plant gives so many people their quality of life back, could you imagine how it would feel for them to be forced to regress back to the miserable state they were in before kratom? Do you want to end this opiate epidemic, once and for all? Continue your education on kratom, learn the truth about it, the benefits, the science that backs up all of my claims, and please join us in advocating this plant and potentially saving thousands of lives and ending this already devastating opiate epidemic Happy Thanksgiving!

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 6:26:55 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 29-year old from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support and opinion of Kratom. I disagree with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions. I believe that kratom could also safely ease this great nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. People are dying everyday. Blocking kratom would also prevent further research. The studies that have been done so far on kratom show it to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I came to learn about kratom from a friend that took it. I currently have a bone disorder, severe anxiety, depression, a tumor on my pituitary gland, PTSD, and idiopathic intracranial hypertension. I live in pain every day. I was taking narco tramadol Oxycontin from my doctor until they told me I would have to go to pain management. I can't go it's over an hour away and I am unable to drive that far. So I started looking for other ways to help in my day to day life. That's when my friend suggested kratom. I started taking in and was able to come off the pain killers right away. I don't feel the pain I felt before. I am able to get out of bed. I can clean my house. I can cook. I can allow family to come over or I can go to their house. That is something I could not do at all. I feel like I have my life back.

I don't feel lagged down like I did with the narco or any of the other drugs. Kratom is a safe

alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has

changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims

of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I feel this may lead to illicit drug use. I know

that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without

kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please

visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:16:11 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I am a 38 year old female and I want to let you know what Kratom has done for me. I am one less in the opioid epidemic and Kratom is the reason. It has improved my overall health and well being. I know what addicted feels like and I am not addicted to Kratom. I get no high from Kratom yet it improves my life significantly. Please reconsider and look to the benefits of it.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:18:25 PM

My name is (b) (6), I am 36 years old and I'm from (b) (6).

I've heard the recent messages from the FDA regarding kratom and the FDA's stand on kratom being a dangerous drug.

I must politely disagree with these statements and urge you to please reconsider this smear campaign.

I found out about kratom nearly 7 years ago from a friend who enjoyed researching alternative medicines. I was a housewife in northern (b) (6) suffering from crippling depression and anxiety. Kratom was recommended to me and it honestly, without a doubt, turned my life around. I noticed results in a matter of days. Kratom allowed me to get to a stable, happy place in my life and I was soon able to stop taking the kratom and live a happy (and withdrawal free) life.

I began taking kratom again approximately 1 year ago for pain, as I have a torn meniscus in my right knee. I have no need for opiate medication thanks to kratom.

This plant changed my world. It honestly did, and I humbly ask you to please reconsider your stance on this plant as it has numerous medicinal values. This plant saved me as I'm sure it has saved millions of other people.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:30:21 PM

Please leave this herbal supplement alone. I am a 45 year old man that has been taking for 3 years now without any adverse effects. I work for DOCCS and this herbal supplement has given me my life back.

Thank you

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:38:32 PM

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 52 year old married mother of three from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about Kratom from doing research on the internet and speaking with users. I researched it for roughly 6 months before I decided to try it.

I suffer from IBS, Chronic pain (shoulder, wrist, neck and back) and mild anxiety/depression. For 15 years I was (over)prescribed narcotic pain medication ranging from Vicodin to Methadone. Because of the nature of opiates, I became dependant; my tolerance skyrocketed and I began needing higher doses for pain control. Along with the painkillers, I have been prescribed Xanax, various muscle relaxers, antidepressants, and nsais. I found little to no relief from any of the above mentioned medications after about 3 months.

Kratom has been in my life for a year now and to say that it saved my life would be a gross understatement. I was missing out on everything. I would get my script from the doctor and be out before the end of the month (due to increased tolerance). If you have never experienced opiate withdrawal, I can only compare it the worst case of the flu you can imagine. I lived in my bed the last week or so of the month...EVERY MONTH. Since discovering Kratom, I am back in the game. I feel normal again. I take it daily, but when I am out I experience ZERO withdrawal symptoms. It is nothing short of a miracle. Before I began taking Opiates I was a very active, vivacious integral part of society. The devastation of a life lived dependant on painkillers is hard to recover from, but I am a success story. I have been free of narcotics for the first time in 15 years on November 22nd. GO ME!

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. We have all lost so much already, please don't take our hope.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:12:11 PM

Good evening,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Thanks

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:30:41 PM

Good evening -

I write to you as a veteran, a mother, a PTA volunteer, a home owner, and a kratom user. My job requires me to do some occasional heavy lifting, and at 50, that's not as easy as it used to be.

On the days I really screw up my back or knee, a nice glass of kratom tea helps me get a good night's sleep and be ready for work the next day.

For it's medicinal value as well as it's help in freeing people from the clutches of opiates, I beg you to keep kratom available to responsible adults.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#) (b) (6)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:40:20 PM

Dear Scott Gottlieb M.D., Commissioner FDA:

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 50 year old women. Ten years ago I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia and subsequently lost my job of 22 years due to my inability to perform my job at an acceptable level. I have severe brain fog, horrible exhaustion, and chronic pain. Just recently I was denied opiates that I have been prescribed for 10 years due to the war on opiates. I was given options of other medications that I have already tried that do not work and have intolerable side affects. I suffer from chronic pain and fatigue 24/7, 365 days a year and because of the denial of opiates, it was suggested by my naturopath that I try Kratom. I am very grateful to have found Kratom. It helps me with my energy and most importantly it has helped control my pain. I am able to function at a higher level and remain out of bed for longer periods of time.

I need you to understand that Kratom is a wonderful plant, and it has saved my life.

I would like to voice my disagreement with FDA's smear campaign against Kratom. Kratom, a plant is helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. As you are aware, it is being discussed to put Kratom on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. Doing so would prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I feel that Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by you and the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own due to my inability to control my constant pain and fatigue. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:57:16 PM

Kratom saved my life!!! I was addicted to opiates at one time but that's not it I was addicted to them because I have depression ..I've tried every antidepressant out there and nothing works. Kratom gave me my life back. I felt like a normal person again. I used to just lay in bed and I didn't go to work for seven years!! Since kratom I have a job and a life again! I have severe depression and anxiety. My mind doesn't feel foggy and I have energy. I don't feel high from kratom nor do I want to anymore. I just feel like a loving responsible human being . Kratom has been a god send literally !!

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:53:30 PM

Hi. I'm emailing you to tell you how kratom has totally changed my life for the better. It has literally given me my life back and given my double amputee wife her husband and caretaker back also. I was addicted to prescription pain killers after I started seeing a doctor about my degenerative disc disease I have along with pinched nerves and severe migraines. This went on for years and years and got worse and worse. I wasn't the same man my wife married. One day a friend came over and saw me and mentioned a plant called kratom. I was skeptical and did alot of research on kratom and finally tried it. Besides my wife kratom is the best thing that happened to me. It is a blessing to me. I have been opiate free for over 8 years now. I am in full support of kratom and I disagree with the lies and smear campaign that has been waged by the FDA. All of those deaths that r being blamed on kratom was the other combinations of drugs that were in their systems at the time. Kratom is a safe and effective alternative to opiates and has definitely been effective in reducing the numbers in the opiod crisis in America. If kratom is made illegal that action I fear will cause more deaths and harm to the American people. Many rely on kratom and it's benefits everyday including myself. I'm living proof along with thousands of others that kratom is not a killer. Many more deaths will ensue if kratom is banned. My quality of life and that of my wife will be changed abruptly if made illegal. I am a productive member of society again because of this wonderful plant. If you have any questions or concerns please visit www.amerikankratom.org. Thank you for your time and service to your state.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

Thank you and God bless.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:10:06 PM

To whom it may concern,

I will try to keep this brief, and succinct. I am a 24 year old male, born and raised in (b) (6) I have been using Kratom as a general supplement daily, for 4 or so years.

I have been suffering from chronic Migraines since the age of 15. I missed the best years of my young life, because of a disease for which there is no cure. I spent 3-4 years on traditional opiates, mainly Hydrocodone. It made my life even worse. I could not wake up in the morning, and avoid taking it – even if I didn't feel the pain.

I eventually broke the shackles of opiate addiction, found adequate treatment for my migraines, found a comfortable, well-paying job, and I found Kratom.. I no longer struggle with addiction, and thanks to Kratom, I no longer worry about Migraines, and the crippling pain they bring.

But now... I worry about my own government, and their apparent disregard for my personal liberties, and my health. A government who claims to care about the health of the populace, but that would rather we be addicted to pharmaceuticals, than take a benign, herbal supplement. I worry that nobody will read this, that nobody will care. But I write anyway. Kratom has helped me accomplish so much... it's the least I can do to return the favor.

I urge the FDA – do not repeat the mistakes of the failed war on drugs. Our country can only bleed so much.

Thank you.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:16:11 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb:

I am writing to voice my concern about the FDA's recent direction with respect to the plant kratom.

I am sixty one years old and had major back surgery (S1-L4 decompression and fusion) a little over two years ago. The surgery was successful and for that I am grateful. However, I was left with chronic post-surgical back pain which limits my activity. I blame it on soft tissue inflammation at the surgical site creating pressure on nerves.

I have been through treatment with a pain specialist, a neurologist, had a post surgery MRI, and a followup with the original surgeon. The only effective management anyone in the medical profession has come up with is opiates. I was prescribed hydromorphone and oxycodone at low doses (16 mg and 20 mg per day respectively), alternating every few months to avoid a tolerance buildup.

About a year ago, I got frustrated and quit the opiates cold for a couple of months. The elevated pain levels reduced my ability to function to the point where I was jeopardizing my job, so I started taking them again but infrequently. About this same time I also began experimenting with kratom. I found out about it through internet research. I am ordinarily skeptical of stuff like this but was frustrated enough to try just about anything. I take it mixed with hot water as a sort of tea. To my surprise it worked and I was able to eliminate my opiate intake and yet remain somewhat comfortable. I settled on taking 3 gram doses four times daily, which isn't a lot but is more than some people take. A couple of weeks ago I was able to cut down to three doses per day instead of four. I rotate strains and periodically take breaks from it to monitor for dependency and tolerance buildup. So far neither of those is a factor.

Maybe folks who take kratom extract can get in trouble with dosage, but for the life of me I don't think it is humanly possible to ingest enough leaf to "overdose". But then again, I've never experimented with doses substantially higher than described above.

If the FDA and/or DEA regulates kratom out of use, I will be back taking opiates again to keep working until I can retire. While the opiates worked and I never exceeded my prescribed dose, I was always aware of the risks. When I quit taking opiates I did it cold turkey. I went through about six days of chemical withdrawal and there appeared not to be any psychological dependency issues. It was not debilitating in my case, more like a nasty cold. But I don't experience that dependency with kratom and have no desire to resume taking something that causes it.

Please reconsider your direction with respect to kratom. Maybe concentrate on opiates for a while instead of worrying about things that help people avoid opiates.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom advisory
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:01:40 AM

Dear Commissioner:

I am writing to you today about an organic herb that is the ground leaf of a tree in the same family as coffee. The media has recently begun portraying this safe herbal tea as some kind of "new" heroin or cocaine, or even a hallucinogen, which couldn't be further from the truth. And we all know about the 'hasty' ban that was narrowly avoided. Kratom should be viewed as an important tool in the solution to the opiate/opioid epidemic, not just another green plant for government agencies to vilify for profit. Kratom has a 2000-year history of safe, responsible use as a detox from opium and alternative to dangerous drugs such as opium and heroin which is easily verified. The Botanical Education Alliance website (botanical-education.org) and Transnational Institute (TNI.org) have extensive medical and scientific papers available showing both its efficacy and almost foolproof safety profile. It has greatly enhanced the chances of opiate addicts to achieve permanent recovery for the same period of time, inexpensively and unofficially. During the last 15 years it has become a staple of many successful Narcotics Anonymous participants, boosting long term sobriety rates by preventing PAWS relapses.

There is no respiratory depression associated with Kratom, an established scientific fact, making it impossible to overdose, since one simply upchucks a larger than necessary amount. There has **never** been a death associated with use of Kratom leaf alone --compare that with any prescription opiate/opioid, much less street drugs.

I worked for a time as a legislative aid, so I understand that lawmakers and regulators have many demands on their time and sometimes only have time to scan the lobbyist statements before voting on some issues. **Don't let that be the case with Kratom.**

You wanted a silver bullet for the opiate crisis? --here it is --use it!

Many thousands, or more, mature American citizens have found kratom to be a safer alternative to opioids or western medicines' "solutions" and an entirely new lease on life without any of the harms or side effects associated with either street drugs or the tightrope of prescription opioids.

The only connection that Kratom (*mitragyna speciosa*) has with opiates is its ability to safely block withdrawal symptoms of street drugs like heroin or dangerous Rx opiates/opioids and provide a safe alternative for pain management and/or mood support. It does not produce a "high" that users will chase, and is ineffective as a

recreational drug. It is actually quite subtle. Other than an absence of pain, no one would notice its effects any more than an espresso coffee. The rest is media hype and misinformation by mislead anti-drug groups and pharmaceutical companies who have noticed a drop in their revenues from the highly-addictive opiate/opioid Rx medications that are wreaking havoc on our society.

Thousands of older adults have been spared the horrid effects of prescription drug abuse by using this relatively harmless dietary supplement as a simple tea. If a ban on Kratom becomes law, responsible adult Americans will no longer be free to avoid the snare of chronic opiate dependence. Leave Americans a choice, don't become the drug pushers!

Allow the many adult, responsible users of this herbal tea to educate you, and you will likely come to the same conclusion as the legislators in most States, that an age restriction of 18+ or 21+ is more than enough "protection" for consumers of this rather harmless herbal tea.

Thank you for allowing common sense to rule this issue rather than media hysteria and misinformation. I realize the war on drugs is always a high political priority, but don't shoot yourselves in the foot. Americans will benefit from your good sense. Good health to you.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and chronic pain
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 5:12:02 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6). I live in (b) (6). I have had 5 back operations, two fusions, 1 left shoulder replacement, two knee replacements, and now my right shoulder is bad. This is all from Degenerative Disk Disease. I am also a responsible Kratom user for 2 years now.

This plant has helped me regain some normalcy to help my body from the everlasting pain that I continue to live with. If it wasn't for Kratom, I could not do half the chores I do at my home, I would be in to much pain.

I was introduced two years ago in (b) (6) after my last back operation and fusion. It is a miracle, I could actually walk a little and as the days went by, I began to do better and better. I am not addicted to anything and I can even stopping using Kratom but I do not want to because it truly helps me get through my day.

If you ban Kratom, imagine the people, including me that will suffer so much more. Chronic pain people are getting hit from both sides now with the Pain Pills debate and now Kratom. You will put me right back in my bed where I do not wish to be. I can clean my home, shop, and watch my grandkids. I am 61 years of age and I beg you, please don't ban Kratom.

Its people that make everything dangerous. Not the plant. Same thing with pain pills. Its the people doing it, not the pills. What I have left of my life is meaningful and Kratom is my pain reliever. It makes me normal. I depend on it.
Study it, Don't ban it.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom as an alternative to opiates
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 9:45:15 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6). I am a 51 year old, hard working mother and grandmother that was hit by a drunk driver many years ago. I live in constant pain, take opiates responsibly, and for the first time in twenty years see the possibility of living an opiate free life thanks to Kratom. I was told years ago to file for disability and I would be on Opiates the rest of my life. I took it upon myself to change doctors, lose weight, returned to work part time but if I would "over do it" I would end up in bed for 2 days. Since finding Kratom I have been able to work full-time again, have started walking 3/4 mile to a mile per day, quit drinking energy drinks altogether, and have been able to lose 15 pounds. I honestly believe that Kratom has the potential to give people like me a future we have been told didn't exist. I agree more research needs to be done and welcome it, but I want the option for ***all natural pain relief*** and the hope it brings.

Please reconsider the actions the FDA is taking to keep Kratom from millions of people that it could benefit. While I do believe that more research needs to be done and some regulation to ensure that the highest quality, contaminant free kratom is available I have experienced first hand what kratom can do when used responsibly. I have also seen and heard dozens of Kratom users success stories. Kratom is not for everyone, but should be an option for adults seeking an alternatives to opiates and over the counter pain medication that are far more damaging than Kratom. *This plant is LIFE CHANGING for many people.*

I am both a kratom user and manage a business (vape shop) that sells high quality Kratom. (as long as it is legal in my state) I have done my research and wish I had known about this 20 years ago when I was first in a position that I required pain medication on a daily basis to be able work. I hope you will reconsider your actions against Kratom, review your "facts" that brought you to the conclusion to take action against Kratom. The American Kratom Association was the starting point when I was determining if I would use kratom and if I would recommend that the stores I manage should carry it as a product. Since that point I have spent countless of hours of research and reading everything I could find and finding quality conscious responsible importers that could provide lab tests to ensure a quality product. I have also seen first hand who is buying and using kratom on a daily basis. I have seen the lives this plant has changed for the better. I understand your concerns but I think the people buying kratom and the businesses supplying kratom are not being depicted fairly at this point. I think the American Kratom Association is very accurate and should be considered.

Who is using Kratom? Almost 100% of the people purchasing Kratom (or attempting to buy) kratom are responsible, hard working adults to retired adults who regularly use alternative options for their health and well being. Many are seeking alternatives to opiate pain medications. They are from all walks of life but most are educated, hardworking or retired people and they are in pain. The break down I have seen is **80% are in pain** and looking for a way to either stay off opiates, reduce the number of opiates they are currently are on, or get off opiates all together. If you have never lived with chronic pain or had a loved one who has suffered from long term pain it is hard to understand the frustration and daily obstacles we face. Another **10% to 15% are addicts**, many in recovery, who have gotten their life back or are seeking to get their life back. **5% or less are in withdrawal** when they come in looking for some relief and it works for most of them. The last group, **less than 5%**, which seem over calculated and emphasized, are people looking for the "high" or euphoria that some of the threads on Reddit, Blue light and similar forums.

Another thing I am seeing and as a manager is this industry, much like the vape industry is already starting to self regulate. I only do business with businesses that supply me with test results that provide me with information insuring me I am getting a pure kratom that is not contaminated with any licit or illicit substance, pesticides or contaminants, e-coli, mold etc.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. Please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/> , that is where I started and I am grateful for their lead in helping people like me.

Thanks you so much for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Availability
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:31:41 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I am a strong advocate for the open and free exchange of the herbal supplement, kratom, in our society. I am a current and experienced user of kratom. I am NOT addicted to kratom, opiates or any other substances. I use kratom when I need to and only when I need to. This isn't a recreational plant. It's a supplement that has single handedly management my anxiety and depression. I've tried prescription medications of all sorts. Nothing has helped. Rather everything before kratom has just put me into a further darkened place. I use kratom about 2-3 times a week. Sometimes more and sometimes less depending on my anxiety and depression levels. Some weeks I don't drink kratom tea at all.

I am a functioning part of society. I work for the (b) (6). I pay taxes. I go to work. I have a girlfriend and a loving family. I support local businesses and work in my community. Regulating kratom would be detrimental to my life. I sincerely and strongly urge you to keep kratom in the same the atmosphere and state that it currently is in our community. It helps so many people. I never never noticed any adverse effect from Kratom. Please let us have this plant in an open and free manner.

If you need to contact me for any reason I invite you to do so:

(b) (6)

or

(b) (6)

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 11:53:18 PM

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 25 year old from (b) (6) and I need your help! I would like to voice my support of kratom and tell you my story and why me and thousands of other people need kratom to function on a daily basis. The FDA has lied and has treated kratom like a dangerous drug which it isn't. I was diagnosed with a condition called fibromyalgia. The main symptom is widespread pain throughout the body. Every day I suffered with crippling pain and fatigue. I was prescribed a medication that did nothing for me and had to continue being in pain without a solution. Sitting and standing would both cause pain. It was very difficult for me to do normal tasks like showering. I definitely couldn't get a job and had to use the little money I get from my SSI to survive.

I hated living like this until I found a plant called kratom. Kratom has changed my life for the better. Kratom allows me to live a life that's almost completely free of pain and has significantly reduced my chronic fatigue. It does so much more than that too. I am diagnosed with several conditions including depression and several anxiety-type disorders. I'm on 6 medications with 5 of those being used to treat my mental illnesses. They help, but not nearly enough. Kratom has single-handedly treated my depression and anxiety better than all my medications combined.

Kratom has done so much for me and I'm not the only one. Thousands of people like me use kratom every day to treat conditions like pain, fatigue, depression, anxiety, PTSD, alcohol addiction, drug addiction, and other conditions. The FDA wants to ban kratom, and thousands of people like me would have to go back to suffering every day. The opioid crisis has killed so many people and without kratom, many of us would have to go back to taking opioid medications and even drugs to treat our conditions. I am not a drug user, but I have a family history of drug abuse. Kratom has helped me, so I don't have to rely on opioid medications and drugs to keep my pain under control.

I ask that you please fight for me and the thousands of other kratom users. We need kratom to live a comfortable life. Kratom is not dangerous like the FDA and media has made it seem, and it does not get people "high" like some people in the FDA and media believe. In fact, there are many many doctors who support kratom and know that it's not only safe, but effective at treating pain. There isn't a single reported case of people dying from kratom without other drugs in their body. This is because kratom can not cause someone to die by taking too much. It's possible to take too much, but the only thing that would happen is that you would throw up and perhaps have mild symptoms like nausea.

I would like you to please check out the scientific studies and facts that The American Kratom Association has put together at <https://www.amerikankratom.org/science> and the many success stories by people like me telling others how kratom has helped them at <https://www.amerikankratom.org/successstories>. Please do not let kratom get banned. I don't want to go back to being the way I was again. I don't want to be in pain. It's a hell that nobody should have to go through. Please help us kratom users continue to use a safe and effective

plant to treat our conditions and live a comfortable life without pain.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 5:57:20 PM

To whom it may concern

I am hoping this email will help with the decision of not banning the herb Kratom. I have a list of medical issues which include Addison's disease, Hashimoto's disease, chronic lymphocytic hypophysitis, Cushing's syndrome, only 1 kidney, and Irritable bowel syndrome seems like a lot but that's my life. I have to take a lot of prescribed medications that keep me alive so to speak. I have been dealing with chronic pain for about 12 months the docs can't seem to find the root cause so I have took it upon myself to find natural remedies to help with the pain I have been dealing with and that's when I had discovered kratom from an alternative medicine store. Since I have been using this amazing plant it has subsided my pain to be able to function again somewhat normal and also has helped dramatically my IBS symptoms I have not had diarrhea since I had started using kratom about 2 months ago. I hope this information that I am giving in this email will change the thinking about this natural plant.

Thanks for reading

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom has given me my life back!
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:42:44 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 29-year old woman from (b) (6) and I'd like to voice my opinion regarding kratom and it's status in the United States. I don't believe the recent smear campaign by the FDA is justified.

I first stumbled upon kratom while reading online about natural chronic pain treatments. I have been suffering from all-over pain since I quit gymnastics ten years ago at the age of 18. Needless to say, all the pounding on my joints and tendons, combined with a natural hyper flexibility, soon led to repercussions that I never imagined.

After about four years in my late teens and early twenties (not the age you should have to worry about chronic pain!) I had had enough of modern medicine's approach to treating my pain. I had tried every possible type of physical therapy available, as well as prescription medications, shots, epidural steroid injections, and last but not least, opioid pain medications. Although effective, narcotic pain medications quickly became an addiction. So after several rounds of pills, followed by withdrawal, and back to the pills, I vowed to myself that I would at least look into natural methods. I tried acupuncture, with no success. Then, one day, I came upon kratom while reading online. I had to try it.

A year and a half later, I can honestly say that I've been given my life back. Kratom has allowed me to wean myself off of narcotic pain medications, as well as go back to work full time. With kratom, I'm NEVER drowsy, am completely pain free (even more consistently than with opioids!), and have no other awful side effects. I know exactly what I am putting into my body, and I get nothing but good out. Above and beyond the daily chores of life and work, I have even been able to start my own online vintage glassware business in my spare time! I have ample energy for everything I need to tackle in a day, plus more. I have never felt so "normal" since before my chronic pain began. Kratom is a godsend.

Now, I plead to you, please don't take this safe herb away from the people of this country. There is mounting scientific evidence supporting the herb's benefits and scheduling it before we have had sufficient time to study its effects would mean robbing its users and potential users from its amazing benefits. This life changing botanical has the ability to save many more lives than just mine.

Thank you so much for your time,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom-- How it has helped me
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 3:08:58 AM

I would like to voice my personal opposition to your Kratom scare campaign. Remember when Kava killed a few people, and it was required that all manufacturers of Kava products have a warning about liver failure on their Tinctures?? The same thing is happening with Kratom today. The FDA refuses to allow Kratom in as an approved dietary supplement, but I urge you, please, to reconsider your smear campaign against Kratom. As it stands, even IF all of the Kratom deaths able to be cited were confirmed, Kratom would kill fewer people than Aspirin a year. Fewer than peanuts. Please confirm this for yourself-- both of these things kill a phenomenal amount more people than Kratom ever has (or hasn't) a year.

I started using Kratom for depression, and due to its purported opioid activity. I was a heroin addict for about two years, at one point, previously. I didn't realize it was a totally different thing. With the help of this miracle herb. and strong, strong will, I have been able to overcome the opioid addiction I suffered for years. I never really used opioids because I wanted to get high-- I was depressed, and I knew that they would help. Kratom is the least opioid-like plant that could possibly be classified as an opioid-- besides black seed oil. Kratom means a lot to me, and I would very much like to see a future in which it is readily available for those who need it, for whatever reason.

Kratom is a safe alternative to drugs that could kill me. I thank god every day for my continued access to this plant, as it helps me get through life without terrible opioid cravings, and keeps me from getting depressed. I don't feel addicted to Kratom in the least. It really isn't much different than a person's morning coffee-- if you threatened to ban coffee, imagine how many angry e-mails you'd get!! I fear that people, in situations worse than mine-- say, someone with a current terrible opioid problem, who uses Kratom just to get through the day, will go back to their previous drug of choice if Kratom is somehow made illegal. This will KILL people. In state that have banned Kratom, opioid deaths rose immediately afterwards. I pray that you will make the right choice for the American people.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom information
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 3:14:07 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 42-year old Professional Administrative Assistant from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and state my complete disagreement with the FDA criminalizing this supplement with a schedule 1 listing without proper research and testing.

Kratom is very simply, the ground leaves of a plant that is very closely related to coffee plant. The leaves are dried and ground into powder which is then used to make tea or herbal capsules. That is the extent of the processing.

Kratom is helping millions of people who are suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions. It is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. I have seen numerous lives, and families, saved through the use of this supplement in supplanting opiate addiction. Categorizing kratom as a schedule 1 substance criminalizes it. That categorization also prevents further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I discovered kratom tea as a means to alleviate my chronic and debilitating PTSD. I am able to focus, navigate life, sleep, work effectively and have a social life because of kratom. As a secondary effect, I no longer use alcohol as a means of escape. I was a borderline alcoholic and did not even realize it until I saw what my life COULD be without the alcohol.

Additionally, I suffer from fibromyalgia and osteoarthritis from a car accident. I have been on every medication available for my pain. Including opiates. But I decided that I would rather live with pain than be addicted like I saw so many people, and their families dealing with.

Another happy accidental side effect of the kratom is the analgesia. It doesn't completely alleviate the pain on the worst days, but it makes life bearable.

I've been using Kratom for a year and 3months.

I do not use it every day.

I take the smallest dose necessary to alleviate my symptoms as needed.

Finally, I have introduced 3 people who were very addicted to opiate painkillers, to the point that they were still in pain and the opiates didn't help. Still, they took as much as they were able to get simply to feed the addiction. All 3 have been able to steadily reduce their usage. One no longer uses opiates at all.

I understand that there is concern regarding the safety of kratom. But banning this supplement across the board is irresponsible, shortsighted and inhumane. People are making use of this in a way that is very literally saving their lives and their families. This

ban, without any research, scientific and/or anecdotal, makes people wonder if the FDA truly has the Safety and Well Being of The American People at heart.

Please continue the honest, unbiased research and testing on this supplement. A schedule 1 ban is frankly unconscionable.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom is nowhere the danger you're making it out to be
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:42:09 PM

Hello -

I really don't see what the fuss is about. I've taken kratom almost daily for 3 years for depression from about 2010-2013 and stopped without much effort. Now I'll take it every few days or so, with months of cessation here and there, as an alternative to alcohol to relieve stress. I still have wine now and then, once a week. It was not difficult to stop kratom, although there were a couple of days of discomfort, mitigated easily with a strategy of tapering dosage over those few days. It was harder to stop drinking coffee.

I suspect your motives.. but I'll give you the benefit of the doubt. I would support regulation over prohibition, but I don't think there is any urgency. I doubt the veracity of your investigations into causes of death in cases where kratom was involved. It seems that for the most part you're completely overlooking the likelihood of other vastly more related causes. I've read about many of these so called kratom-related deaths. If you are so sure, why aren't you releasing the results of your research? the toxicity reports?

More importantly, this is an issue of quality control yet you aren't shutting down those responsible for adulteration and are not incarcerating them for negligence at the very least. Why?

If the intention is prohibition, I say to you: leave me alone - I am an adult, 40 years old, I have worked productively for my entire adult life without interruption, and I am building a wonderful family. I do not need a nanny to make my decisions for me. If this was really about protecting the public, then why are opiates over-prescribed? Why is heroin still coming into the country en masse? I know this stuff overlaps into international politics and subterfuge.. but kratom? who gives a rat's ass? After all, it could be the answer to a large part of the opiate problem. If the addicts knew about it, who knows how quickly they could get back to leading normal lives? Why aren't you encouraging rehab facilities to look into this? your attitude is simply irresponsible.

Now, if the intention is regulation and quality control, fine. But that does not require any quick action that might kill any efforts to research the possible good that can come from kratom. Instead, focus on shutting down sellers of extracts or other concoctions. Anything other than plain leaf unprocessed kratom could be targeted. Any manufacturer of a product that led to deaths (like the Krypton thing years back) or was found to be adulterated.. Prosecute! Then get with the industry leaders to create some standards and a clearly defined importer/manufacturer/distributor tiered system. I'm sure they would work with you on this. Doing so would prevent the riffraff from getting material or business because they simply wouldn't have the seal of approval.

Anyway, the way things look to me, you're not going to get the public on board with prohibition. It's just not a believable story. People WILL die from opiates if a prohibition comes to pass who wouldn't have otherwise; kratom is preventing deaths, not the other way around.

That's about all I have to say, and I didn't even get into the hypocrisy of being opposed to kratom while being OK with all the other things that are legal and even glamorized.

Best regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Miracle Plant
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 10:48:24 PM

Please review and correct your stance on Kratom. I have used Kratom for about A half decade, and it really helps me manage my health and well-being more than anything. I have nerve damage in my ear that cause chronic pain. I also used to have anxiety so bad I had to leave A job in the past. Kratom helps me manage my health and well-being better than any other thing I have tried. There isn't anything I've tried that works as well as Kratom and believe me I've tried everything under the sun. Kratom is safe and benign. Please look into the Dr. Jack Henningfield Ph.D 8 Factor Scientific Study on Kratom, the Botanical Educational Alliance's book, Kratom, A product of use, not abuse", and the Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 Factor Scientific Study on Kratom. These studies can be summarized as, Kratom is A safe dietary supplement for human consumption. Kratom is definitely as safe as unscheduled unscheduled dietary supplements as hops, guarana, koala nut, chamomile tea, and St. John's Wort. I encourage you to review and correct your stance on Kratom. Dr. Jack Henningfield is one of the world's experts on Addiction and Abuse liability and has A Ph.D. He believes Kratom is safe and I give you the most powerful encouragement you believe the same. Disclaimer: Kratom is sold to me as A botanical with no medical claims. I know that Kratom is not intended to diagnosis, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. I know the Law about how dietary supplements are regulated and I follow the Law.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saved my life.
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 9:42:33 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 26 year old male from the beautiful small town of (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

At the age of 13 I was diagnosed with Manic Depressive bi polar disorder and ADHD which held me back tremendously through schooling and every form of education I recieved. I've been on countless medication since then with very little success.

During my senior year in high school I broke my hand and leg terribly in a four wheeling accident at the age of 18 and that's when the downward spiral truly began.

As an attempt to treat the pain, the doctors kept feeding me painkillers until the age of 21. I had an out of control addiction that ruined my life. I destroyed all of my relationships with family and friends. I was a waste of space to society until I caught wind of this plant grown in Asia that you know as kratom. After researching for months I finally took the plunge. I went from taking 20 oxocodone a day, two different medications for ADHD and one for my Bi-Polar disorder to taking a tablespoon of a crushed leaf a day.

I went from being a person who couldn't excel at anything, to a 26 year old construction superintendent building cooling towers at Google and other industrial facilities all over the world, a father to a beautiful two year old daughter, and a husband to the most amazing woman in the world. Kratom has helped me become the succesful young man I didn't think I could Be.

Ive been using this plant everyday for the past 5 years, and my quality of life has substantially increased. If you inhibit my ability to use this, I am Deathly afraid I will lose everything I have. I can not go back to the person I was before. My story is only one of many lives that this plant has saved.

I truly fear this action by the FDA. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

--- (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom SAVES Lives
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:40:16 PM

Kratom is safer than coffee (unlike kratom, you can actually OD on caffeine). It has helped save thousands of lives. There is more than enough evidence to demonstrate that it is safe. If someone is drinking coffee and has a heart attack, does that mean the coffee killed them? That is what you are claiming with your "35 related deaths". Most of them died from FDA approved medicines that you conveniently forgot to mention were also in their system and which are known to be fatal. Why don't you focus on preventing people from dying from the medicines that you are supposed to be regulating instead of a natural tea. You going to be going after regular tea next?

Leave our natural, safe, and healthy tree leaves alone. I've seen your canned response. So here is my response to that. You have complete control over what the FDA is choosing to do, which is currently going after kratom. So don't redirect me to congress. I am going to contact them too.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 5:13:02 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I'm 27, a mother of three, and live in (b) (6). I'm writing you to urge that the FDA and DEA reconsider the attack on Kratom as well as refrain from spreading misinformation about it. I have been diagnosed with Endometriosis, sciatica, and fibromyalgia. I deal with chronic pain and fatigue on a daily basis. I take kratom every single day, from a reliable vendor, and it has been a miracle for me. It has kept me from seeking pain management, and using alcohol to control the pain. I really do not want to be on opioids, please please, do not make this plant illegal in Texas.

The other day, the FDA facebook page had posted some misinformation about 37 deaths related to Kratom. This is not true, those people also had things like alcohol and Xanax in their system. To blame the kratom is absolutely not fair to those of us that need this. If you look in the comments on that post, you will see thousands of comments from kratom users arguing otherwise and stating exactly how much kratom has helped them. Please, go read those comments and please, stop this attack on Kratom.

I sincerely appreciate this message being read and what those of us fighting this and asking for help are saying being considered.

There is a man named Chris Bell who has podcasts and interviews explaining the science and benefits of Kratom. Please take them into consideration as well.

Thank you.

-(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Mitragyna Speciosa (Kratom)
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 4:38:31 PM

Good Aternoon,

I am writing to you in support of keeping Mitragyna Speciosa (Kratom), legal and freely available. I am a 55 year old, professional, married, father, who has found great benefit from the plant. It is impossible to overdose on it. There have been ZERO deaths attributed to Kratom use despite the disinformation of 36 reported deaths. Besides, How many deaths are reported each year from Tylenol? If necessary, I plan on contacting my representatives in order to stop this assault on a very wonderful, non-addicting, natural plant. Heck, it is from the coffee family. I urge you to listen to the people's voice.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My health and wellness
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:35:21 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

I am a 52 year old female from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about Kratom from a chronic pain support group for Lupus which I suffer from. Along with many other things. I was diagnosed at 11 years of age and have struggled with pain for most of my life. Which in turn have then had to fight anxiety and depression from the pain. I have spent so much of my adult life not being able to enjoy life and not being active. I started supplementing with Kratom after much research and it has given me my life back. It helps with my anxiety and depression, gives me an energy boost and I am now an active and contributing member of society again. It has helped me to be a better wife, mother and grandmother and has given me my life back. Kratom provides me with health and wellness. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Including a link to the study of 8 factor analysis Showing that Kratom is safe and not addictive and not a danger to anyone. https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9ba5da_81de7c70750748f2807bf0d1b96e301d.pdf

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My story and support for Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 12:06:35 PM

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002
CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 33-year old Male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-I came to here about kratom via researching my back pain and mild depression/anxiety.

-It has been a great addition to my natural arsenal to combat my back pain, sciatic nerve, and my mild depression/anxiety. I have been on some anti depressants for my depression/anxiety and at some point they just stopped working. Kratom helps me immensely. I have been dealing with this for about 20 years, but Kratom has made it manageable. Since I've started using Kratom over 3 years ago, I have been able to completely get off of my anti-depressants and taking Tylenol and Alleve almost every day.

-With kratom I am able to do a better job at work, I have energy to work out and generally all around better mood.

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My Story
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 6:09:12 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I am almost 34, and I have used kratom for over 6 years. I am very open to further scientific studies and reasonable regulation. However, everyone keeps trying to make it a banned or illegal substance. I wish to share a little bit of my story with you.

(b) (6). I was detoxing and have come close to dying, probably several times. Other people I know have used Methadone and Suboxone, but I have always struggled to pay for my insurance, and without going to a clinic detoxing from opiates/opioids, nobody would ever help me. I have now been using kratom safely for a very long time. I think I can be a very solid example for its lack of negative ramifications.

If this substance becomes banned or illegal, I personally know about a hundred addicts that will not know what to do. We have changed our entire lifestyles. Doing illegal drugs and being addicted to them, brings with it a whole criminal lifestyle that is necessary to perpetuate feeding the addiction. When you quit drugs, you must also learn to stop even the smallest thought patterns that become commonplace when you have to live that way.

All of my family knows that I use kratom. None of them are super excited about it, but they got their son, brother, father, grandson, and friend back from a darkness and dismal life that was almost extinguished far too early.

Taking kratom away from responsible users is a massive mistake. It is a misunderstood substance that aids in various forms and profound ways in people's lives. I am not illogical or prone to exaggeration. With that said, I believe with absolute certainty that kratom is the answer to the opioid epidemic. Please reconsider the FDA's stance on this plant. Please stop this attack on what is saving so many lives and can save so many more in the future. You would be labeled a hero in the long-run. Of this, I am absolutely certain.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

--
(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please do not ban kratom.
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 5:07:51 PM

I found kratom when I was looking for methods to recover from alcoholism. In truth, alcoholism was a symptom of a deeper lying issue, which I've had since I was a child. Maybe you've already guessed. Anxiety and Depression. Seems like everyone and their mothers and children claim to have it now, right? Well I guess I had it before it was mainstream. I'm 32 years old, and only in the last year have I found something that eases the symptoms in a way that doesn't make me feel high, or numb, or drunk. I only take kratom, at moderate amounts, when I need it. I've tried the pharmaceutical route and had undesirable results, even affecting my health. I understand wanting to further study a substance people are starting to widely use that actually has an affect on the brain. I want those studies to happen as well. I'd be really unhappy to find out a few years down the line that what seemed like the first thing that has actually helped me with my depression/anxiety, and successfully wean off alcohol, turns out to give me liver failure. However, spreading misinformation about it being an addictive opiate, or synthetic drug will not help anyone think critically as we move forward in our fight to find what can help people with chronic mental and physical ailments. There are so many veterans who use kratom for ptsd and anxiety. I think that they might be the best proof of the fact that it's not simply an opiate people are taking to get high. I think some people do take it to get high. But honestly, I would never describe the feeling as being high. It is a feeling of relief from thoughts that would otherwise distract me from my work, my physical health, and even from being able to sleep. I'm guessing this message is being typed in vein. I'm another faceless internet user in a sea of internet users. But just in case someone's actually reading this, I'd like to invite you to ask me any questions you have about my use of kratom, and I'll try to be an objective and effective advocate. Thank you.

Sincerely, (b) (6)
(b) (6) State, USA

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Do Not Criminalize Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 6:40:21 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb:

I am a 37-year-old female from (b) (6). I have been suffering from back and shoulder pain for over 8 years now. Nothing worked to help me. I've had steroid injections, taken pills, used TENS units, trigger point injections, went to a chiropractor, I've seen osteopaths and pain management doctors...NOTHING helps. Pain pills help but only to dull my awareness of pain that is still there. The only thing that does not make me feel impaired and sleepy is Kratom. Kratom makes it possible for me to get out of bed without being in agonizing pain. It has helped me avoid pain medications that I was becoming dependent on and have had horrible issues with in the past. Kratom truly saved me, and I am heartbroken to see that the FDA and DEA are making it a villain for no reason. The science and facts do not support this--only conjecture from medical examiners whose findings have been called into question several times before. I can't even see how you could overdose on what's essentially a tea leaf. So many people rely on this herb to help them get through the day without having to lie down or stop what they're doing. I am one of them.

I beg of you, please reconsider this. Regulate it, if necessary. Require proof of age over 18 or 21 to purchase it. Allow it to be available to those who need it. I would be willing to apply for a card as they do with medical marijuana in some states to purchase it from authorized vendors. As long as it does not become a black market "drug" that was only helping people (especially as it is not a drug--it's a leaf). I find it insane that the FDA and DEA are okay with having Narcan available in every Walgreens and on every EMS worker and police officer, because the opioid epidemic is so widespread and pervasive, but we're going to demonize a leaf that helps people *stay off of street drugs.* It's keeping people from being dependent on pain pills and more serious drugs, which is critical with the widespread opioid overdose epidemic. It helps with alcohol dependency, because the root of that is anxiety and depression, along with genetic factors, and Kratom eases anxiety and depression. It helps with PTSD.

Listen to those who are telling you how much it has helped them, and you will see how invaluable it is to this country. Please, please do not take it away from us. We are only trying to ease our pain issues and remain productive. I can only anticipate you will see an increase in opioid overdoses and relapses in addition to an increase in street drug use if a ban on kratom goes through. People who are harmlessly taking this leaf now to ease pain will have to do something, and they will likely go from Kratom, which was not causing overdoses, to something that they could ultimately OD from. There is no logic in this ban, other than to punish people who must self-medicate because no one and nothing else has helped them. We are responsible adults who deserve the opportunity to improve our health and well-being with an herbal supplement that is no more dangerous than St. John's Wort or tumeric. Please rethink your stance, if only for the tens of thousands who use it responsibly to improve the quality of their lives.

(b) (6) ur time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please don't ban Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:09:34 PM

Hello, I have been using Kratom for a year and a half and have had nothing but good results from it. I take it for mood, energy, pain and believe it or not, sleep. And since I've been using it I have used far less Xanax, sleep meds and pain meds. It has lowered my blood glucose level. It has stopped my IBS. I'm more outgoing and friendly. I'm doing much better at work' I'm more motivated and ready to take on different tasks that I would have shyed away from before. It's weird, you don't feel anything but you see the affects. I'm not a opioid user nor do I have cancer. I'm just a regular guy that has benefited much from this tea leaf. Please keep it legal.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please help the American people (Mitragyna Speciosa)
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 6:18:17 PM

My Name is (b) (6), I'm a 21 year old from (b) (6). I disagree with your recent claims toward Kratom (Mitragyna Speciosa), and I urge you to take a closer look at the research. Also take my word, as I have been using Kratom for my chronic back pain, and anxiety for about 3 years now! I could not see how it would be possible to die from just Kratom alone. I know several people who use it, and no one has ever had an issue. I urge you to remember that it is just powdered leaf, gathered, then dried. It grows wild all over Southeast Asia, and they themselves take it everyday. Most of the time it is sold in capsule form; sometimes as an extract, which isn't even necessary when consuming Kratom. I think that we should wait until more research is done on Kratom and even Kratom extracts before you take it away from so many people that it is helping. So much research has been gathered supporting Kratom! Not only does Kratom bring opportunity for people to stop taking prescription medications, it also provides options for small international business interactions. I'm asking for your help, to please reconsider what you've recently said about Kratom. I'm also asking you from the bottom of my heart, to not let your opinion on Kratom be altered by greed. You would be closing down thousands of small business, not only here, but also all over Southeast Asia. Kratom brings economical opportunities to the United States, and isn't that what we all want? Try to remember this is America, home of the FREE! Let us try to keep it that way!

-(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please help us
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 11:43:01 PM

Good evening Mr. Commissioner. :)

My name is (b) (6) and I'm 37 year old resident of (b) (6)

I am a huge supporter of Kratom & am disgusted with the FDA's attempt to smear this miracle plant.

There is so much disinformation and lies out there spread by government agencies that it makes you wonder what their real agenda is and who are they working for??

Because what they are doing is definitely not in the best interest of THE PEOPLE!

Kratom is an amazing plant that is helping millions of people suffering from chronic & acute mental & physical conditions.

Kratom is also safely easing our nation's opiate epidemic problem NATURALLY.

All of the disinformation and inaccuracies spread by the FDA is putting Kratom on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin!!!

Making kratom illegal would also stop the research in its tracks. :(

Current research proves that kratom is an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression, the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started to use kratom 4 years ago.

After 2 back and spine operations my doctor had me on a cocktail of pain killers.

I was completely addicted and a walking zombie.

These brutal drugs that I was prescribed to made me completely isolated, depressed, suicidal, and I completely lost myself.

It was all such a haze that I didn't even know what day of the week it was.

Then my children heard about Kratom online thru a chronic pain support forum!!

My kids had been desperately trying to get me off that prescription poison so they could have their happy and loving father back.

Not only did Kratom help me not have barely ANY withdrawals after years of being addicted to hardcore opiates but it immediately took away the pain the same way as all the prescription drugs had.

Believe me I was skeptical and thought that my kids were crazy but IT WORKS!!!!

Thanks to Kratom I was able to snap out of the zombie world of prescription opiates and got my life back.

I started a successful Real Estate investment business and organize the biggest rooftop Reggae party in Chicago at Estate.

Before Kratom I was an empty shell with a dead soul completely ravaged by prescription medication.

How can the FDA tell me, a person who has experienced this life saving plant firsthand, that it is as dangerous as heroin?????

This is completely insane and cannot be further from the truth.

Not only was I able to get off 3 different prescription opiates but I am back to my normal self.

I can function now, without the pain, and without the haze of these horrible horrible horrible medications that doctors are ruining peoples lives with.

When I was on the prescription medication I overdid it a few times because the amount of pain that I was in and ended up in the ER countless times.

I even overdosed once.

The prescription meds ruined my health and mental wellbeing to the point that I wanted to die.

This has NEVER happened while I have been using Kratom.

It has been the absolute opposite.

I feel NORMAL and do not have ANY pain.

I'm sorry if I've been rambling but it truly is a miracle plant that is 10000% safe.

If anybody tells you otherwise they are lying or have no idea of what they are talking about.

I AM PROOF OF THIS AND HAVE BEEN FOR FOUR YEARS.

I cannot even tell you how many people started to use kratom because of my story at chronic pain meet ups and have had their lives transformed also...

Kratom is a MUCH safer alternative to prescription drugs.

I feel like I drank a cup of coffee after taking some and my pain completely disappears.

That's all.

I am NOT a zombie anymore like I was from prescription drugs.

Everybody that I know cannot believe that they saw on the news about Kratom because everybody knows that it is not true...

I AM PROOF.

How can they make me a criminal for wanting my normal life back???

My life without kratom will be a nightmare.

Please do not make me go back to prescription hell.

I know I probably did not talk about everything that I wanted to but <https://www.amerikankratom.org/> has REAL AND FACTUAL information.

Not the lies that the FDA has been telling everybody.

I really trust with my heart and soul that you will not allow people like me to become a criminal because I chose a leaf of a plant that is related to coffee instead of the hell of pharmaceuticals.

Please Mr. Commissioner see the light.

Much LOVE,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep kratom legal and available
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:06:31 PM

Hello,

I am an adult who uses kratom responsibly. I am in good health, and have had minimal adverse effects from the plant. I use a small dose nightly for insomnia and to treat some lingering shoulder pain I have from a former physical labor job I once worked. It agrees with my body better than ibuprofen, and I do not wish to seek a prescription for harsher opioid pain killers.

Banning kratom would adversely affect my quality of life, and hurt millions of others.

Please keep it safe, and legal.

Thank you kindly for your time.

Best regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep kratom legal and available
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:02:42 PM

To whom it may concern:

I am an adult who uses kratom. I am in good health and have had minimal side effects. Making kratom unavailable would severely adverse my health and happiness. I urge you to please keep it legal and available.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep Kratom legal
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:27:26 PM

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to beg you to please keep Kratom legal. It is the only medicine that has taken away my chronic pain.

Shortly after my 40th birthday, I developed a migraine disorder. Over the next few months, the migraines increased in frequency until they reached their pinnacle at about 20 per month. Sometimes, the migraines would last for days and days, ultimately landing me in the E.R. I visited my primary care physician who then sent me to a neurologist. That neurologist placed me on various meds that were fairly useless. So i tried another neurologist. The next did botox injections which, after about 4 months, reduced my migraine frequency to 5 per month. But those migraines could last anywhere between 1 and 14 days. Prior to discovering Kratom last year, my migraines were at this same frequency and I was visiting the E.R. for relief at least once per month. Prescribed rescue meds were of little use.

In July 2016, my neurologist told me quite simply that there was nothing further modern medicine could do. In fact, he claimed victory in reducing my migraines from 20 down to 5 per month! But I refuse to accept that this is my life. I am only 43 years old and I am not ok with the notion that my next 50 years will be peppered with 60 to 100 migraine days per year. That is unacceptable.

Well in August 2016 I started looking elsewhere for relief. Since my doctor couldn't help, I was forced to look for herbal remedies, which is something to which I am generally opposed. Then I found Kratom. And it was a miracle! I am now on a daily Kratom regimen and my migraines have now reduced in frequency to once per month. And when they do come, they stay for roughly 3 hours, not days and days.

I understand that you have issues with Kratom. However, chronic pain management is an area in which modern medicine has completely failed us. You can't simply take away a substance known to work without offering an alternative I've tried all the pharmaceuticals. I've tried the triptans. I've tried everything my doctors have given me. I even went so far as to go the Stanford Headache Clinic with equally abysmal results.

If you can provide me a solution that my entire medical team cannot then I welcome the opportunity. But you can't just take away the single thing that has helped. You can't. It's inhumane. My mother used to tell me that identifying a problem without offering a solution is called whining. And, with all due respect, that is exactly what the FDA is now doing.

Please, I beg of you, don't take this away from me. Don't relegate me to the unenviable position of that level of pain again. It will drive me to madness.

I invite you to contact me at your convenience should you wish to hear further input. Thank you for reading this lengthy email.

--(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please reconsider kratom...
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:35:51 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) I am 37 years old and from (b) (6) I just want to voice my opinion on the recent interviews and actions you have engaged in regarding Kratom, M. Speciosa. I take Kratom and I do not think that it causes death, in fact there have been no cases of death attributed to Kratom as far as I can see. It is a case of confusing causation with correlation. I take Kratom for my three anxiety disorders, depression and back pain, all of which I have been diagnosed with by psychologists, psychiatrists and doctors. I have been given the FDA approved medication that they prescribed, it is much more dangerous than Kratom. The ones that weren't dangerous, just simply didn't work. Kratom has personally made my life better, it has saved me for a devastating addiction to alcohol (FDA approved), benzodiazepines (FDA approved and subscribed to me) and a load of other pharmaceuticals (FDA approved.) I know you have put yourself into a position right now where you have to look powerful, and I know you are a powerful person, I just ask that you reconsider your stance. Please help us that are on the other side of this. Millions of people have had their lives changed for the better by utilizing this safe herbal alternative, please don't take this away from us at the height of the opioid crisis, please don't take this away from people who it is benefiting.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: PLEASE SAVE KRATOM. KRATOM IS SAVING ME!
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 4:57:02 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

I know you are busy, but I'm hoping you or your staff can take just a minute to read and consider my message.

I am a hard-working, marketing professional. I am also a recovering alcoholic with 20 years of sobriety. I have chronic pain, depression, and ADHD. Kratom has single-handedly eradicated those issues from my life. I am more pain-free, I am happier and I work better due to Kratom. I have never felt the slightest bit addicted and I could stop taking it today.

My girlfriend, (b) (6) has Lupus severely affecting her brain now. She is in constant pain and her cognitive functions are being affected. Due to Kratom, she has been able to reduce her prescription pain medication by over 50%. It's incredible what this plant does.

I know it needs more study, but the dangers of Kratom are highly sensationalized and inaccurate.

I beg of you to take time to step in the shoes of people that have been saved because of Kratom. Please ask yourself; "If I or a family member had any ailment requiring pain medication, would I want them to consume addictive pills or a plant that's as harmless as coffee?"

Please read more about Kratom and please don't push the button on its demise. I know you have an important job to do, but I simply ask that you consider the people that are benefitting from its legality.

Best regards and THANK YOU,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please stop the attacks on Kratom...
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:25:36 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) I am 37 years old and from (b) (6) I just want to voice my opinion on the recent interviews and actions you have engaged in regarding Kratom, M. Speciosa. I take Kratom and I do not think that it causes death, in fact there have been no cases of death attributed to Kratom as far as I can see. It is a case of confusing causation with correlation. I take Kratom for my three anxiety disorders, depression and back pain, all of which I have been diagnosed with by psychologists, psychiatrists and doctors. I have been given the FDA approved medication that they prescribed, it is much more dangerous than Kratom. The ones that weren't dangerous, just simply didn't work. Kratom has personally made my life better, it has saved me for a devastating addiction to alcohol (FDA approved), benzodiazepines (FDA approved and subscribed to me) and a load of other pharmaceuticals (FDA approved.) I know you have put yourself into a position right now where you have to look powerful, and I know you are a powerful person, I just ask that you reconsider your stance. Please help us that are on the other side of this. Millions of people have had their lives changed for the better by utilizing this safe herbal alternative, please don't take this away from us at the height of the opioid crisis, please don't take this away from people who it is benefiting.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:44:37 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6) and I am a 30 year old father and husband. I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and DEA and their smear campaigns against the natural plant.

Kratom is a leaf from a tree that has assisted many people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical problems that is all natural and safe to use. The corruption in our government by pharmaceutical lobbyists is demonifying and vilifying this plant that has never been responsible for a single death. The effects of this plant are not much different than drinking a cup of coffee, and kratom is actually a member of the coffee family.

This nation is experiencing a serious and deadly synthetic drug epidemic, mostly focused around opioids and synthetic opioids. Kratom is NOT a synthetic opioid, nor an opioid, though it does act on some of the same receptors in the brain. However, kratom does not cause respiratory depression, which is the leading cause of death among opioid overdoses. Nobody has ever died from a kratom overdose. In fact, if you ingest too much kratom, you might vomit and get a headache. That's it. I would like to note that kratom is safer than alcohol.

This plant has assisted me greatly in life. I am a father to three beautiful daughters and husband to a beautiful wife who is a cancer survivor. I moved away from Florida because my doctor there was prescribing me large amounts of pain medicine and I needed to get away from it so I moved back home to Texas. Kratom provides me pain relief and helps me get through the day no different than caffeine does for some people.

I am a dedicated father and husband, a full-time college student, and the primary caretaker for my children, and kratom is something that I have used responsibly and I disagree with anyone taking away my freedom to use natural supplements to manage my health WITHOUT using heavy narcotics. If kratom is banned, many people will turn to those heavy narcotics and this (in my opinion) all stems from pharmaceutical lobbyists pushing to rid the American people of this health-improving supplement.

In conclusion, kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs and has important benefits for a variety of issues that many Americans deal with every day and this plant has changed my life for the better. I fear the actions by the FDA and DEA regarding kratom will lead to tragic deaths and a worsening of the opiate epidemic sweeping our nation. My quality of life and productivity as a member of society would be negatively affected if kratom were to be banned or scheduled.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit www.americkratom.org

Thank you for your time and your service to these Great United States of America.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Save Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 11:01:40 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 40 year old single mother of 4 from (b) (6) .

Three years ago I was in the darkest time of my life all due to PAIN KILLERS!! I had been taking them for back pain from my first pregnancy due to complications with my epidural. Like many others, I got completely addicted to the medication but yet I was still in a lot of pain.

My marriage fell apart, I was deeply depressed, I just wasn't the same person I once had been and I knew that had to change.

So 2 years ago I decided that I had enough and I got completely clean but yet I still had major pain from my back and still extremely depressed. Then I found Kratom!

Kratom gave me my life back! Kratom took away my back pain! Kratom helped me love life again! Kratom gave my daughters their mother back! Kratom saved me!

If you take Kratom away I will have no other choice but to be a drug addict again. Please don't put me back in that dark place again, please!

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Scott, please read:
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 8:37:42 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I'm from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-I learned about Kratom back in 2010 and used it from then on until 2013 to help mitigate symptoms of a bad case of depression following the death of a close friend in an automobile accident in the summer of 2010. I also found great success in using this botanical to help combat severe Generalized Anxiety Disorder that I have had my entire life.

Since 2007, I have been on a plethora of different prescription drugs for depression and anxiety. Although I found some to be beneficial and help in the short-term, my body chemistry did not get along with most of these medications as the side effects (like heart palpitations, loss of memory and ability to recall memories, even an all-around loss of appetite as well) outweighed the benefits of me taking them. A friend told me about this botanical called Kratom. It's a tree in the coffee family (Rubiaceae) and it can be very beneficial with very little side effects. As things would turn out, this ended up being a complete life saver for me because at this particular point in time in 2010-2011, it helped me leaps and bounds and essentially saved my life, I'm not even kidding. Using ½ tsp of the leaf powder 3x/day allowed me to wean myself off my anti-anxiety medication (clonazepam 2mg/day, Xanax 1mg as needed) and also my anti-depressants medications (Lexipro, mirtazapine, and Prozac).

I stopped taking this plant when legislation was brought forth to restrict access to this plant for people in (b) (6) and can say that many people undoubtedly suffered because of this legislative decision. This is not why I am writing you today, but instead I am writing you because this plant is still legal in the majority of the United States and it needs to stay that way. It is extremely hard to fathom how many people this plant helps every day, as I know firsthand how beneficial and life-saving the properties of it are. We need to keep this plant legal so our families and friends who are in need of an all-natural alternative to pharmaceuticals have access to it. If it does not work for them, they can decide that for themselves and choose to not take it. However, if it does work for them (as it very well could) then they can continue supplementing with this botanical and can happily add it to their arsenal of self-help supplements as they see fit.

In short, Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic and may actually even increase the amount of other non-opiate drug related overdoses as well. I know that for the people who do still take this plant, their quality of life as a productive member of society will never be the same without kratom.

- Kratom is a plant, NOT a synthetic chemical or "Street Drug"
- Kratom has been safely used for thousands of years as a medicine

- No one has ever died from taking Kratom alone.

- It is impossible to overdose on Kratom

- Tens of thousands of Americans can attest to the beneficial properties of Kratom

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/> as their website or

facebook is great place to get information like links to superior scientific and academic peer reviewed studies, etc. about.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: STOP THE BAN ON KRATOM
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:35:24 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Kratom has been a life saver for me when I was addicted to pain killers. It helped me get through withdrawals and I am not clean of any prescription opiates and I honestly know in my heart of hearts it is because of kratom's ability to help me through the pain associated with detoxing.

Please understand that passing laws to criminalize kratom will make the opioid crisis worse.

I am asking that you really get to know the benefits of kratom before banning it or regulating it.

Thanks,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Stop...
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:25:13 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 25-year old permanently disabled woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping MILLIONS of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective broad spectrum mental and physical pain reliever that does not cause respiratory depression or overdose; the main causes of death from opiate overdose.

I discovered kratom shortly before my local hospital wrongfully took my father's life.. For most of my life I have suffered from the debilitating pain of degenerative disc disease, bursitis, occipital neuralgia, and osteoarthritis. Also in 2012 not long after my mother died, I was diagnosed with complex PTSD. During this time, for which I was still in my early 20's, my doctor's ONLY wanted to give me lethal narcotics.. these narcotics of which killed two of my family members as well as a multitude of friends. Since discovering this plant that has yet to be proven to kill or harm anyone, I have much more freedom. My biggest freedom being from the shackles of these "legal" narcotics that have torn families apart, ruined careers, and kill every day. I have been able to cope with the emotional abuse I endured, my panic attacks have lessened in frequency and severity, I am now a healthy weight and no longer obese, my pain isn't completely gone but so much more tolerable, and I am no longer terrified to leave my home or drive. If history is doomed to repeat itself, then please direct your attention to the days of medical cannabis criminalization. These days of which were wrought with false claims and fraudulent accusation towards a plant. Of course, there are so many more people who are for kratom and know the facts than there are those who falsely accuse a plant. Once again, we the people are facing the wrongful criminalization of a god given, seed bearing plant because of a few bad people with their own greedy agenda. Please, for the sake of millions who have had their life changed, condition improved, and freedom back, please stop this theft of freedom of kratom. There are so many more important issues today such as the very real opioid/narcotic crisis . We are the people, and we are many.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If it was your children or family, wouldn't you rather they have a safe way to ease their suffering? If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>
Feel free to call me to hear my story

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,
--- (b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @aol.com
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Support of Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:21:48 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 47 year old wife and mom from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA recent negative statements. Kratom is an effective painkiller and anti-inflammatory that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I saw on CNN the report "Can the kratom plant help fix the opioid crisis?" Featured where two sisters who were chronic pain sufferers. They became addicts for no other reason except they had chronic pain and the medical professionals failed them. I cannot relate to addiction but the chronic pain I can relate to. Kratom allowed the women to function normally, helped them with withdrawal and replaced the pain medications. Most notably the women were able to be there for their family, function normally and join in their lives. No more failed additive medications.

Why I tried Kratom. I have spinal arthritis from scar tissue after two back surgeries. My first surgery was almost 20 years ago. I have suffered from chronic pain for 2 decades. I exercise, eat an anti-inflammatory diet, and take anti inflammation supplements. I did many spinal cortisone injections over the years; I cannot use naproxen or ibuprofen due to stomach problems. I have been prescribed oxycodone but feel ashamed to even use this as relief, I have no history of over using these medications, there is too much of a stigma attached them. So I suffer silently.

Kratom is pain relief that is in my control. I can control the dose, which strains, find one that suits my needs perfectly. I take Kratom once day at night. I use all my pain management techniques all day long and by the end of the day I am stressed and unable to deal with pain, this is when I take Kratom. After three weeks I also found it to be the most impressive anti-inflammatory treatment available. I can get out of the bed in the mornings with no problem I am no longer stiff and I can function. I also find that I have no cravings to take Kratom during the day and expect that will continue. I can control when and how much I need to take to manage my pain. I also have experienced zero side effects.

Herbal solutions require knowledge. I researched Kratom for weeks and decided it is right for me. People who take Kratom are very knowledgeable about this plant. Not everyone is opened to herbal solutions for medical problems. I hardly see Kratom as any threat to prescription drug sales. Most people have insurance that will pay for medications and it's not everyone's cup of tea to drink a bitter liquid for pain management.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>
Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Thank you Commissioner, happy Thanksgiving! On behalf of kratom, please read.
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:48:42 AM

Commissioner Gottlieb,

I hope you are doing wonderful and that you are preparing to spend Thanksgiving with those you love and are truly thankful for. I'm thankful for many things. I'm thankful to live in the United States, where we are able to speak openly and freely about things we believe in. I'm thankful for my beautiful wife and our 2 1/2 year old son, (b) (6) I'm thankful for my friends and family and I am thankful for kratom. I am thankful for all of the good that kratom has brought into my life and for the healthy feeling of well-being it invokes. I'm thankful, at 37, that I am in the best physical condition of my life, eating well, working hard and finding balance. I am also thankful for the FDA and for the protection your organization offers American consumers. Thank you for all you do.

I am thankful for the countless lives that have been saved and improved by substituting kratom for deadly opioids. I'm thankful that so many people have been able to change their lives, for the better, thanks to this incredible plant. I'm thankful that kratom was introduced into my life and the incredible role it has played in escaping the tightening grip of alcoholism, and encouraging me to pursue a healthier lifestyle. I am thankful that kratom has sharpened my attention and allowed me to focus more clearly on the individual tasks at hand, enhancing my personal productivity without the use of prescription amphetamines. I'm thankful for the general sense of well-being kratom provides and the more positive outlook on life the plant encourages. I'm thankful that I do not fight days long bouts with depression any more. I am truly thankful that kratom is a part of my life.

I am thankful that I can write you such a personal letter, as a stranger, with realistic hope of it being read and considered. I am hopeful that you will read this, and strongly consider your course of action regarding kratom. Please keep kratom legal. Please allow further research to continue in earnest. I'm thankful for all the progress we continue to make in creating a better world. Thank you for all of your concern in keeping our wonderful country healthy and thriving. I am thankful for your time.

What are you thankful for Commissioner?

With sincere gratitude,

(b) (6)

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: The suicide rate in America will go up if Kratom is banned.
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 12:10:12 PM

That's all, I don't even use the stuff but I know many recovered addicts and chronic pain patients who use Kratom as a last resort. This ban will effect the least and most vulnerable among us, while the head shops will just move into something even more dangerous again. For once, please look out for the best interests of American citizens instead of the pharma lobby.

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: (b) (6) here - Kratom Personal Story
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 7:50:38 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6), I am 34 years old, and I've recently moved to (b) (6) this past September. I am a Kratom user that is very afraid of the ban of Kratom. You have selectively chosen your "facts" and have told untruths to the media. I'm sure you are already aware of the website, but please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/science> for actual studies and a plethora of information regarding Kratom.

As for my personal story, I have three different chronic pain conditions. Two of those pain conditions I will have for the rest of my life and it is unknown if the third will ever go away. Cervical Dystonia, *likely arthritis within my SI Joint, and idiopathic chronic headaches; I said "likely" arthritis because my doctors could not find evidence of it on my MRI and Xray scans when I had them done years ago yet the symptoms fit arthritis. In ~2014 I was formally diagnosed by specialist doctors, but I had these conditions for years before.

I am in pain every single day and I take 2-3 tsp twice a day of Kratom powder to ease pain from my three conditions. The negative side effects of the 15+ various traditional pharmaceutical medications, like Tramadol and Cymbalta, were too great to remain on and I am still on a few that only sort of help. For the past 10 months I have taken Kratom every single day and my quality of life has improved. Pain is still something I experience every day, but instead of it being at a 7 daily it's at a 4 or 5 which is manageable for me. The only negative side effect I have experienced while taking it has been nausea from either taking too much at one time or a strain not agreeing with me.

With the DEA plan of reducing opioids even further in 2018 I am very worried about the legality of Kratom in the present. I don't take anything else for my pain except Kratom, I don't drink alcohol, I have tried other pain medications that had horrible side effects or didn't work, I've tried physical therapy several times, and I don't do drugs. Kratom is and has been a safe lifeline for me that has helped me be more active during my good days.

Once you have done further research I hope you will, at the very least, make Kratom a supplement instead of outright banning it. It would devastate thousands of people, as I am definitely not the only one that it helps, if Kratom is made illegal. With imported shipments being seized it has already negatively affected many. Those of us within the Kratom community are very scared and hope time will be taken to read messages like mine, learn the truth about this life changing plant, and rule Kratom as a supplement.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

P.S. I've never emailed the FDA before, but I hope I am doing this correctly.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Truth
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 1:56:12 AM

Sir, Americans pay your and your Dept to do your job. Yet hundreds upon thousands of people die from opiates that you allow n our system. You claim 32 deaths from kratom, that's one day for opiates. Why are you attacking an herb that helps thousands of people, are you defending big pharmacy? Is there a reason I'm looking up marijuana deaths and finding one which is schedule one, when I look up alcohol and it's not even scheduled. What are you guys actually doing? It's apparent that you are not for the people, cause the people have spoken. They want kratom legal and it helps them in several areas. The only people complaining about it are the ones that can lose money from it.

The govt agencies grow worse and worse as we speak. Maybe instead of kratom being investigated it should be the departments.

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You Love Reading Me The Most ♥ Reading All Of Me Is Inevitable
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 10:45:41 PM

I am A responsible Adult Kratom User. I have used Kratom for about A half decade. I am sold Kratom by my vendor without any health claims and it even says on the Kratom packaging that the Kratom isn't intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. I believe there is A discrepancy between what is has been said in the FDA's public health advisory on Kratom and the truth about Kratom. More specifically in the Kratom advisory it says some marketers touting Kratom as A safe treatment with broad healing properties. I have bought over 15,000 grams of Kratom in my life as A responsible adult, and never ever has Kratom been marketed as A safe treatment for anything. I assure this is not something I have been aware of ever, and I would identify as A responsible adult advanced consumer of Kratom. Kratom Vendors know they aren't supposed to market Kratom like that without going through the proper channels to pass FDA approval process first. I have advanced first person experience in the Kratom Industry and all I seen is A refusal to market Kratom as A safe treatment as A means to better market as A dietary supplement and all the Kratom I have become aware of is sold as A dietary supplement without health claims and isn't intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Kratom is safe and benign. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD. and one of the world's best addiction experts once said, "Kratom is very safe for A dietary supplement consumed by millions of Americans. Dr. Jack Henningfield, PhD, Vice President of Research, Health Policy, and Abuse Liability at Pinney Associates did an 8 factor scientific study on Kratom and is in my opinion the Earth's number one expert on studying Kratom with Science. Please I give you the most powerful encouragement to have the same stance on Kratom as Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: # IAMKRATOM
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 8:04:47 AM

i'm emailing you in regard to the inaccurate kratom information you are putting out . i am a 53 year old grandmother of 6 . i was on opiate pain meds prescribed by my doctor for 17 years . i have several chronic pain issues that will never get better . i tried kratom for the first time in january 2017 and am off 4 rx meds including norco 10's which we're slowly killing me . i cannot go back to opiate pain meds . please stop the slandering of kratom . do actual research . please leave our leaf alone . i have never felt as good as i do now thanks to kratom . respectfully , mollie chernugel kratom user !

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: A testimonial on the benefits of Kratom as medicine
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 8:28:14 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is (b) (6), and I am a 28 year old from (b) (6) who responsibly takes Kratom for a number of medical conditions. I'm here to express my support for this safe medicine, and my utter horrification with the current FDA smear campaign against this thousands year old medicine. I'd also like to urge you to refer to legitimate peer reviewed studies, and continue conducting research on this safe alternative painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression - the leading cause of opiate overdose. Aside from the evidence that nobody has ever died from it's use (you use a study that cites 26 deaths. Not only is this a fraction of those who've died from legitimate prescriptions, but the study actually looks at people who had Kratom, along w/ other drugs, like benzodiazepines, in their system. It is scientifically proven that one can NOT die from Kratom alone).

I would like to offer some anecdotal evidence in hopes that you will consider the millions like myself when addressing Kratom:

Since I was a toddler, I've suffered debilitating and chronic stomach problems. Throughout primary and secondary school, I was in and out of doctors, looking for solutions. I was constantly getting colonoscopies instead of running around outside with my friends. Scores of prescriptions had no positive affects. Fortunately, I was able to get through school despite missing an average of 40 days per school year.

When I first went to college in 2007, it became too difficult to continue getting good grades with this medical condition, as I

was regularly forced to miss class. I began seeing more doctors, who determined this condition stemmed from severe anxiety. This began a regiment of addictive prescriptions. Before long, I was completely addicted to benzos and opiates. This actually worked for a brief moment in time, but before long, I was a total opiate addict. I began purchasing stronger drugs illegally to quell my stomach, as well as withdrawals. Soon after, I dropped out of college, and turned to heroin. My life completely fell apart, and I began a 5 year journey as an IV heroin addict. I couldn't keep a job, and was soon homeless. I was constantly in legal trouble, and was waking up regularly in jail cells, hospitals, and ambulances. I overdosed more times than I can count, and was pronounced dead twice. I was certain I would die soon, which at the time, I welcomed.

Ultimately, I ended up in rehab for my addiction in (b) (6). I didn't put a single drug, not even Advil, into my body, for the next 2 years. During this time frame, I found a job, and enrolled back in college. My stomach problems, however, returned with a vengeance.

I began missing class and work, again. I was terrified that I would lose everything again, but knew I couldn't turn back to opiates. I was in quite a dilemma. I began researching, and stumbled upon Kratom. Everything about it sounded like it was worth trying, except I read a few testimonials that read like the current FDA warnings. I wasn't sure if I should risk turning to something that was supposedly addictive, and similar to opiates. After further research, and more sick days, I decided that the pros outweighed the potential cons, and gave it a shot. Thank god I didn't listen to the false reports that spoke of its supposed dangers.

This, in 2015, marked the first time in my life that I have ever functioned as a normal adult. Kratom could completely abort my

stomach bouts within an hour. I was able to peel myself off the bathroom floor and go to work or class. This was unbelievable. Nothing had ever worked for me, from diet and lifestyle changes, to meditation, to prescriptions. I felt human again. It is not hyperbole to say that this was an absolute miracle.

I began responsibly using Kratom nearly every day. I never once developed a psychological addiction. Not once would I wake up craving it, as I would with opiates. If I were to skip a day, the withdrawals, at worst, were akin to skipping my morning cup of coffee. As it stands today, I've been taking Kratom for over 2 years. I have abstained from dangerous opiates, and completely cured my debilitating illness. I have held the same job for nearly 5 years now, will be graduating with close to a (b) (6) this spring, and will be attending (most likely) (b) (6) in the fall for my masters, where I will be researching drug policy reform. My goal is to research how drug policy perpetuates our nation's current opioid crisis. I pray I will never have to write an essay on how the recent ban on Kratom is contributing to more opiate deaths.

Should Kratom become illegal, I have few options. I can return to having no medicine, which will almost certainly lead to me losing my job, and dropping out of school. In this scenario, I will most likely end up on disability for the rest of my life.

This will most likely become unbearable, in which case, I will be forced to turn to the black market, either for Kratom, or because I have turned back to opiates. The obvious problems here aren't even worth describing.

I ask that you please reconsider your current stance on this safe painkiller that is helping millions of people like me maintain a quality of life that is otherwise impossible. I enjoy being able to

wake up every morning, and handle my responsibilities as a normal adult. There is no doubt in my mind that Kratom is responsible for this.

Thank you for reading,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Concern over FDA Kratom Advisory
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 5:21:22 PM

Good afternoon,

I'm writing to voice my concern over the advisory statement issued earlier this week. I work as a policy analyst, have a graduate degree, and am an avid yogi and hiker - I am also a responsible consumer of kratom. Kratom eases my depression and anxiety without the debilitating side effects of prescription drugs. It is the opposite of a classically addictive opioid drug as it enables individuals like me to function at their highest potential rather than retreat into a cycle of addiction.

I am very concerned that, if kratom were to be banned, many people would be pushed back into depression or substance abuse. People will die and more Americans will lose loved ones to drug overdose or suicide. I do not intend to be dramatic - these impacts would be real and consequential.

I support further research and potential regulation of kratom, but I urge the FDA to ensure that Americans maintain access to kratom while such work is done.

Thank you for your continuing service to our country.

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA release on Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 6:19:08 PM

Scott Gottlieb M.D.

Commissioner

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

10903 New Hampshire Ave.

Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002

I am voicing my disagreement with the way the FDA has publicly represented the use of Kratom.

I am a 56 year old disabled adult from (b) (6) who chooses to use this plant for my health and well -being.

The FDA has literally been using smear campaign techniques about how this plant affects those who use it.

It does not cause any euphoric high or altered mental state when used in the manner it should be used.

If classified in the same category as LSD, further research about this most excellent botanical will be dis-allowed.

I became aware of Kratom through my local health food store.

I am a disabled adult with severe degenerative disc disease, cervical spinal stenosis, radiculopathy, axonal and demyelinating neuropathy, and spondylolisthesis.

I have undergone extensive testing and also physical therapy on numerous occasions.

I have tried NSAIDS, gabapentin, muscle relaxers and amitriptyline, which have all failed to help with my condition.

In fact these prescription drugs have caused more harm than help.

I started using Kratom this summer to help with my conditions.

I no longer use the prescription drugs, which did not work for neuropathic pain.

Kratom has been the most successful product for treating my condition.

By using Kratom, I am able to take care of myself, and my home.

Without Kratom, I have difficulty walking, cleaning my own home and grocery shopping.

I can enjoy a few hours of activity and am no longer a slave to the whims of a pain management clinic, or insurance company.

Kratom gives me independence and autonomy to treat my condition in a manner that best suits me.

Kratom is safe when used responsibly and is a good, affordable product..

It has changed my life.

I feel the proposed action by the FDA in regards to Kratom is irresponsible and will cause many, many, decent people to suffer.

The quality of my existence will suffer without Kratom in my life.

If you are sincerely a representative of the people, then please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/> and read the latest and most comprehensive information about this plant.

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Fwd: Save Kratom/My Kratom Story
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:30:56 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: (b) (6)
Date: Mon, Nov 20, 2017 at 12:22 PM
Subject: Save Kratom/My Kratom Story
To: CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov <CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov>

Dear Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6) I Am a 33 year old woman from (b) (6) I'd like to voice my support for Kratom use and legality. I disagree wholeheartedly with the recent FDA campaign against Kratom. Millions of suffering people, including myself, have safely found hope, new life, and easement of our conditions with the help of Kratom. There has been many studies supporting Kratom's safety and medical benefits and many people can attest to its benefits. I am one of them and I'd like to tell you my story. I started using natural remedies five years ago, after several failed years of pharmaceutical use. My body cannot handle chemicals, antidepressants made me more suicidal, lethargic, anxious, and depressed. They gave me tremors and twitches. Mood stabilizers sent me to the ER with severe allergic reaction. I can't even take most antibiotics due to my body rejecting them with allergic reactions. I have to use natural remedies, beauty care, and cleaning supplies. I have Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder which developed early in childhood. I was severely abused, tortured for 12 years. Seven of those years I was raped by different men, one of whom lived in the same house. So nearly every day he was abusing and raping me. I was a slave forced to work and be used by men. This has haunted me throughout my life. I've suffered many traumas even after being rescued from my childhood situation. As a result of or separate from the trauma and CPTSD, I have Fibromyalgia, Major Depression, OCD, ADHD, PMDD, Body Dysmorphic Disorder, and chronic upper and lower back pain. I have tried everything to recover but I hadn't seen any real results until I found Kratom. Kratom has saved my life. I had known of Kratom for years but didn't start taking it regularly until June 2017. I'm so glad I started it, I was completely hopeless before. Every day I Am amazed at the results I'm seeing, every day gets better and better. I have the life that was stolen from me back. I have no negative effects from it, none! I'm currently on disability but with Kratom's help, I think I can be off disability within a year. My overall quality of life and sense of well-being have improved greatly. I Am no longer experiencing suicidal thoughts, the pain and depression have lessened, the flashbacks and nightmares have lessened. I'm leaving my house a little more, my hair is growing back, I have motivation to live. I'm a part time caregiver for my two war veteran grandfather and all these improvements brought on by Kratom help me be a better caregiver. I can spend more time with him and better care for his health. He sees the improvement in my life and that makes him happier. I owe all of this to Kratom, it has helped me when nothing else could. Kratom saved my life. The thought of losing Kratom is devastating to my heart and mind, to my spirit. I can't bear to think of the nightmare my life was before. Please keep Kratom safe and legal, it is a safe natural alternative that benefits so many. Many, like myself cannot handle chemicals or pharmaceuticals. We need natural options to heal our afflictions. Kratom gives life back, it doesn't take. It is a blessing and a gift from nature. I fear that a ban would destroy lives and take them, even my own. I've worked so hard to get my life back, Kratom gave me that, I

don't want to lose it. Kratom saved me.

Thank you for your time, it is greatly appreciated. If you'd like to know more about Kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

They are wonderful, intelligent people there.

Again, thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: In regards to FDAs latest statement on kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:31:09 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I've been using kratom for close to 2 years. I suffered with an addiction to pain pills for close to a decade and then suboxone, an even deadlier alternative that is given to addicts to keep them off of drugs. This will never make sense to me, suboxone had caused nothing but havoc and destruction in my life. That was, until I found kratom. I was 140 pounds, all skin and bones, pale white and sickly. I began to isolate myself more and more as time went on to a point I went several years without seeing my own father. I struggled to go into work everyday due to my chronic anxiety and all of this just scratches the surface. Since i found kratom, i look great, have been reunited with my friends and family, i not only have no issues going into work but I've become the manager. My life is going great for the first time in over a decade and taking kratom away will do more than just send me back to where I started, it will significantly damage our country. The opiate epidemic we face will triple. We've lost enough already to this demon, do we really want to keep feeding it? Please, help us to right this wrong and have the FDAs inaccurate analysis be examined more closely. Thanks. Have a good day

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 12:01:33 PM

I am a 48 year old male who has suffered with chronic pain due to injuries I have suffered in my work. I had been using opioid pain relievers after surgery and became addicted to them. I was not only able to get free from addiction to opioid drugs because of the alternative of Kratom but now use Kratom daily to manage my pain. It is an amazing natural alternative that works extremely well for me, and I have not had any ill effects or side affects since I started using Kratom. I would not be able to function daily and maintain gainful employment without it. Please be fair and look at the science and research this plant before you take it away from so many people that have found it to be a Godsend.

Respectfully

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:14:01 PM

I am writing to let you know that I stand with and support the American Kratom Association in their request to keep the herbal supplement Kratom legal in the United States of America. I totally disagree with the recent FDA smear campaign that states Kratom is dangerous, and can cause death. Certain supposedly cited cases of Kratom related deaths have been exaggerated and found to be fraudulent when the evidence had been reviewed under the freedom of information act by independent sources. The fact is that Kratom, a naturally grown plant, is helping millions of people who suffer from severe acute and chronic pain, as well as offering beneficial properties to those with other mental, and physical conditions. It is also being used to safely assist those who are fighting to regain sobriety from narcotics. This alone could be a game changer in defeating the opiate epidemic we are currently seeing across the nation.

I am a 68- year-old woman with a 20+ year history of severe chronic pain. I have fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, degenerative disc disease and osteoarthritis. I have used a vast array of medical and psychological therapeutic treatments as well as numerous prescription medications. These modalities have left my pain undertreated and greatly impacted my ability to lead a normal active life. I have taken prescription medications including opioids as prescribed by my physician. None of these have alleviated the constant pain, severe fatigue and mental anguish. I had to leave a job I loved as a nurse and retire on disability. I could not function because of the pain, fatigue and mental foginess. At one point I was bedfast and reliant on family members for my care. Every day was a battle to accomplish activities of daily living. As my physician tried different narcotic medications and increased dosages, I found that they only “took the edge off the pain” and never completely relieved the pain. I could see that ever- increasing doses of opioids was not the answer and would only lead to addiction and other complications with risks so I began to search for other alternatives.

I approached a friend who has similar medical issues because she seemingly had found something that was working and improving her health and vitality. She told me she had been using the herbal supplement Kratom for more than 7 years. She explained how it benefited her, and that she had never experienced any negative effects from it’s use. She helped me find a reputable vendor and I began using Kratom. I am happy to report that Kratom has been beneficial in alleviated my pain, increasing my endurance and I no longer experience the mental foginess from use of prescription opioids and other prescription medications I had to use. I have been able to eliminate most of my prescription medications. I am thrilled to say that since using Kratom, I have not needed, nor used one single prescribed narcotic medication. It has been nearly 3 months now and I am doing great, thanks to using Kratom. I also have experienced NO side effects that are common to narcotics such as depressed respiration or drug related cravings. I have been able to lead a productive, normal, active quality of life and am able to enjoy activities that I was formerly unable to entertain. I believe Kratom is a safe, effective alternative to many pharmaceutical drugs.

As a adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and general symptoms, I urge you to reconsider your stance on banning Kratom. Please take into consideration all of us you are using

Kratom responsibly and finding positive health benefits in its use. I fear that if Kratom is banned there will be even more deaths related to the use of opioids and illicit street drugs. I know I don't want to go back to depending on dangerous narcotics and other medications that promise relief but offer little.

If you have further questions about Kratom, please search the information available <https://www.americkratom.org> Their website contains good information and scientific studies

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal and available.
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 2:47:37 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 51-year old male from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about Kratom from an on-line video where doctors were discussing its use in the EU. And discussing how it is safe and has been used in Eastern medicine for over a thousand years without any reported death or injury that was solely caused by Kratom. Any deaths or injuries were caused by other harmful substances that would have had the same outcome without Kratom being involved. They discussed the benefits of using it. They discussed how to safely use the product. And how it is seen as a safer and natural alternative to pain medications and psychiatric medications. They also discussed the benefits of helping people with opioid and alcohol addictions.

I suffer from Anxiety / Panic Disorder. I have suffered my entire life. The symptoms are more physical than mental. I have had panic attacks that mimic a heart attack and ended up in the Emergency Room just to discover it was a panic attack. These attacks can be triggered by no known reason. I have surges of adrenaline and cortisol that surge through my body. I have heart palpitations, breathing issues, chest pain, pain in my arms, body tension, dizziness, weakness, temperature fluctuation, gastrointestinal issues, high blood pressure (fluctuation), and a feeling like I am going to die or lose my mind. They can strike out of nowhere. They can strike right in the middle of me having a great time and feeling safe. I was waking up with full blown panic attacks not caused by nightmares. My doctor was worried about frequently waking to a panic attack causing a heart attack that he prescribed me Propranolol to take at bed time to prevent it causing a heart attack.

I seen a psychiatrist who prescribed me anti-depressants and benzodiazepines. I then got depressed. So they upped my SSRIs which caused worst depression. And as they kept upping the dose I got to debilitating depression which I never had before. At which point I could not sleep, so they added anti-psychotics in order for me to sleep. This threw my world into chaos. I have a trusted family doctor that I have gone to for years. He even noticed me getting worse. He had an argument with the psychiatrist about over prescribing me medication. I am a lawyer, but I also have a medical background. I have completed two Emergency Room

Technician clinicals. I received an A+ in nursing pharmacology. I am also an EKG Technician. I realized what these pharmaceuticals with their hazardous side effects were doing to my life. I insisted the psychologist remove me from these medications. He stated if he did, I would just be back worse than before. I fired him. With the help of my family doctor, I was able to get off of all the medication except alprazolam. When the SSRIs went, so did my depression and all the other horrible side effects. I started using vitamins, omega fish oil, and a few other natural herbal supplements. I seen an improvement, but still suffered from anxiety and panic attacks.

After learning about Kratom, I discussed it with my trusted family doctor and with my gastrointestinal doctor. Both doctors researched Kratom, and agreed for me to try it. I started using Kratom documenting what strain I was using and amounts taken. I found that taking 1 teaspoon mixed with almond milk at night really helped. Especially cutting down me having waking panic attacks while I was sleeping. I added taking another teaspoon of white Borneo Kratom in the morning. I noticed a massive improvement in my anxiety. And I have even been able to cut down the need to alprazolam. It is very rare for me to have a panic attack when I take Kratom. I have had zero negative side effects. My physicals since being on Kratom have showed no effects on my liver or kidney function. We have noticed positive effects in that my blood pressure has returned to normal. I have also stopped the need to snack or nervous eat, and I have seen myself slowly lose weight. I have also become more motivated, and I am able to think clearer. Kratom has helped me return to a normal life or homeostasis.

If Kratom were suddenly removed, I fear the anxiety and panic attacks to return. If Kratom were taken away, it would have a negative and disparaging impact on my life. I have done research into Kratom, and I find that research agrees with me as do a lot of doctors in the EU and in Asia. The University of Miami has come to the same conclusions. The FDA decision to stop Kratom would be highly unfair to me, and would change my life for the worse. Also researching the legal and Constitutional issues of banning the product based on false and biased information would allow me to take this issue to the Federal Courts. I hope that we never have to go down this road. I hope that you will look fairly and without bias at evidence that supports Kratom and that it is safe. I appreciate my family doctor and my gastrointestinal doctors who researched and monitored me taking it. Because it was legal I felt safe talking to my doctors about it and getting their advise. In fact I discuss all supplements and vitamins with them as well. I am lucky to have doctors who truly care. I am asking that the FDA will care about my condition as well and keep the only thing that has successfully treated it legal.

In conclusion, I know from my research, monitored use, and experience that Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic consequence or even the death of victims should the FDA ban Kratom. I know that my own quality of life as a productive

member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me. I appreciate your considering my opinion on Kratom, and I am hoping that the FDA will do the right thing.

Thank you again for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal!!!
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 10:00:25 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am a Kratom user. But first I am a mother of four, wife, grandmother & small business owner. I have been in business for approximately 14yrs. I own a housecleaning business, with that comes a lot of physical work. My priority has been my family and putting their needs first which had led me into this career choice. After 10yrs my lower back had been damaged. I have been diagnosed with degenerated disc, three to be specific. However after trying several routes, including physical therapy, pain medication, and yoga. I currently rely on my inversion board and my morning dose of Kratom. This has been a GODSEND! It isn't cheap as I prefer to use a high end vendor. I would be much more comfortable if it was better regulated, however I definitely don't want to lose it . Please find a way to continue to make it available without hurting the people that depend on it. Keep it legal is my opinion. By the way, I love that it doesn't get me high like those evil pain pills! Those should be illegal not this.

Thank you

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:25:57 AM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 37 year old woman from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have been taking Kratom for more than a year now. I was introduced to it by a friend of mine who is interested in natural remedies. She knew that I have had trouble switching through several prescribed medications and suggested it as an alternative to what I was previously prescribed.

I was in a car accident in 2006 and have been in chronic pain since. In addition to the pain I also suffer from PTSD from the incident. I have been fearful of driving and even being a passenger in the car too. In addition to the chronic pain and PTSD, I also am bi-polar and have severe anxiety issues. Since taking kratom, my mood has changed for the better, my anxiety symptoms have been under control and my pain level is manageable. Before kratom I never had the energy or the willpower to clean my house or go anywhere. Now for the first time in 14 years my parents will be coming to my house for the holidays. Since I have found kratom, I am currently off of all pain medications and I am down to only one medication to control my anxiety. My life has changed for the better because of this non-habit forming herb.

Kratom is very important to me. I have lost several friends and even some relatives in the past years because of the prescription drug epidemic. People are dying because they are becoming addicted to drugs that are legal and prescribed by their doctors. I have spent countless hours in my local courthouse fighting to have my now dead friends and family members "(b) (6)" because of their out of control prescription drug problem. I have my life back because of kratom. Like I said before, for the first time in 14 years my parents are coming to my house. Before kratom my house looked like I should have been on an episode of Hoarders. Myself and my friends who were once dependent on prescription pain medications have been able to stop taking the deadly pills that were prescribed to us.

In conclusion, Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keeping kratom legal, what it means to me.
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 12:01:19 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 31 year old male in (b) (6) I have fibromyalgia scoliosis and 7 herniated discs, and have suffered from chronic pain for 12 years. I was on 11 medications for pain depression and anxiety. I discovered kratom while looking for alternatives for pain because I wasn't getting relief from the medicine. I use to be on opioid medicine for 10 years and I was not getting relief and was taken off of them, I have had nerves burnt out in my back and injections with little effect. Since I started taking kratom my life has improved tremendously, and can get around easier and function better, I am down to just a couple medicines now thanks to this amazing plant. Despite things said about kratom I know it does not cause respiratory depression or adverse effects like opioids do. Taking access away from this plant for me and others will be devastating to our pain management. We are consenting adults who have a right to manage our pain with natural alternatives that are effective. Americans should have the right to decide for themselves what is best for them. Tobacco and alcohol kill a lot of people and are completely legal with no medical benefits. A benign plant should not be controlled when it has so much medical benefits. Please keep kratom legalized and keep our rights intact. Thank you for your time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 7:50:07 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 11:09:57 AM

Good morning,

I am (b) (6) and am a 32 year old living in (b) (6). I want to express my feeling and support of kratom. I had a severely broken ankle back in (b) (6) and was on large amounts of oxycodone. I am a wife and mother of 4 and hated the side effects of those powerful pills. However, I needed them. I came across a kratom pain relieving group on Facebook. I was skeptical at first.. Did some research and chatted with several users of Kratom. I tried some in March and it has truly been a life changer. Instead of having to take powerful pharmaceuticals I can simply take a small amount of powder. All natural.. And be pain free!

I have 8 screws in my ankle and leg. Please do not ban kratom or label it as a drug like heroine.. It can and does save lives. Pharmaceuticals are dangerous and addictive. The pain pill epidemic has claimed thousand of overdoses and deaths. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 11:13:56 AM

I am an ex heroin addict and the only thing that saved me life to make me live a normal life is kratom it's natural and it's no different than tea. I really hope you guys pass this threw the FDA because kratom does save Lives.

Thank you, (b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 12:01:15 PM

<https://news.olemiss.edu/new-hope-for-addicts/>

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 1:08:09 PM

Please regulate this wonderful plant and make it accessible to those wanting a much healthier natural alternative to dangerous prescriptions. My 78 year old friend went from taking 90mg of morphine a day to taking 6grams of kratom. She feels like living again. She is moving back to (b) (6) and will be force to go back to pain pills. Please make it legal.

Thank you

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 1:12:01 PM

Sir,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

History will judge us all how we solve this crisis...

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 1:44:37 PM

Dear Sir or Madam:

The science on kratom does not support your claims. What are you doing?

(b) (6) Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 2:27:53 PM
Attachments: [Henningfield_Eight_Factor_Analysis \(1\).pdf](#)

Dear Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 24 year old college student. I've been interested in the recent media coverage of the substance Kratom. As a researcher I have looked into the claims made about Kratom.

From my research I can see the health benefits of kratom. I decided to give it a try to help me sleep at night. In a small dosage I experienced deep sleep without any drowsiness in the morning. After several days of use I stopped and did not experience any side effects.

Time would be more well spent on funding more research on kratom instead of fighting against it. If it's had so much success for Americans, why not try to better understand the substance? Here is a survey of 6000 kratom users and the benefits they've seen:

<https://www.painnewsnetwork.org/kratom-survey/>

There's current research about kratom I would invite you to read below, as well as their referenced sources for more information.

Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

Kratom used to treat opioid addiction.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3670991/#!po=79.4118>

Assessment of Kratom under the CSA Eight Factors and Scheduling Recommendation

November 28, 2016

Contents

List of In-Text Tables.....	4
List of Abbreviations	5
1 Summary, Interpretation, and Discussion of Abuse Potential Data	13
2 Analysis of Kratom under the CSA 8 Factors	21
3 Review of the Eight Factors of the Controlled Substances Act	21
3.1 Factor 1: Its actual or relative potential for abuse.....	21
3.1.1 Animal Data on Drug Discrimination and Reinforcement.....	23
3.1.2 Summary of Factor 1	30
3.2 Factor 2: Scientific evidence of its pharmacological effect, if known	30
3.3 Factor 3: The state of current scientific knowledge regarding the drug or other substance	33
3.4 Factor 4: Its history and current pattern of abuse.....	35
3.4.1 History	35
3.4.2 Federal Surveys	37
3.4.3 Other Federal Data Sources.....	38
3.5 Factor 5: The scope, duration, and significance of abuse	40
3.5.1 Internet monitoring.....	41
3.5.2 Dr. Oliver Grundmann Preliminary Report on Kratom Use and the Health Impact of Kratom Consumption – An online anonymous survey.....	44
3.5.3 Testimonials Regarding Benefits.....	46
3.6 Factor 6: What, if any, risk there is to the public health.....	46
3.6.1 American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System (AAPCC-NPDS)	48
3.6.2 Pediatric/Child (less than 6 years of age) exposure related adverse events and deaths.	48
3.6.3 Ex-US Safety/Toxicity Data	51
3.6.4 Deaths Possibly Involving Kratom	52
3.7 Factor 7: Its psychic or physiological dependence liability	55
3.8 Factor 8: Whether the substance is an immediate precursor of a substance already controlled under this subchapter	56
4 Recommendation	56
5 Conclusion	64
6 References.....	65
Attachment A: Testimonies of Kratom Consumers.....	75

List of In-Text Tables

Table 1. Number of units that would be required to achieve discrimination and reinforcement from several over-the-counter products.	26
Table 2. Number of Unweighted Cases of Kratom, Aspirin and Diphenhydramine Reported to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2010-2014.	38
Table 3. National Semiannual Estimates of Selected Opiate and Related Drug Reports in NFLIS, 2009-2014.	40
Table 4. Verbatim accounts from Internet reports from a website that typically attracts people with histories of diverse substance use and abuse to describe their experiences	41

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
7-OH-MG	7-Hydroxymitragynine
8FA	Summary Analysis of the 8 Factors
AAPCC-NPDS	American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System
AKA	American Kratom Association
APA	American Psychiatric Association
CA ²⁺	Calcium
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNS	Central Nervous System
CPP	Conditioned Place Preference
CSA	Controlled Substances Act
DAWN	Drug Abuse Warning Network
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DSM-5	The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition
EC ₅₀	Median Effective Concentration
E _{max}	Maximal Efficacy
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FDCA	Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
g	Gram
GI	Gastrointestinal

Abbreviation	Definition
h	Hour
i.p.	Intraperitoneal
IC ₅₀	Inhibitory Concentration of 50%
kg	Kilogram
MeOH	Methanol
mg	Milligram
MG	Mitragynine
MTF	Monitoring the Future
N	Number
N/A	Not Applicable
NEISS-CADES	National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-Cooperative Adverse Drug Event Surveillance
NFLIS	National Forensic Laboratory Information System
NIDA	National Institute on Drug Abuse
nM	Nanomolar
NSAIDS	Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs
NSDUH	National Survey on Drug Use and Health
p.o.	By Mouth, Orally
s.c.	Subcutaneously
SAE	Serious Adverse Event
SE	Southeast
SG	Surgeon General
SR	Sustained Release
TEDS	Treatment Episode Datasets
THC	Tetrahydrocannabinol
US or U.S.	United States

Abbreviation	Definition
USC	United States Code
δ	Delta
κ	Kappa
μ	Mu
μM	Micromolar

Definitions

Term	Definition
Abuse potential (liability)	<p>Abuse potential, often referred to as abuse liability, is the term used to describe the risk that a substance carries for sustaining self-administration due to central nervous system effects that are typically reinforcing and often pleasant, yet associated with harm. From a regulatory perspective abuse potential is evaluated by 8 factors listed in the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) for the purpose of determining if a substance or drug meets criteria for placement in the CSA and regulation as a controlled substance. In that case, the level or severity of abuse potential is a factor in determining how restrictively a substance or new drug should be regulated. Many substances that are not placed in the CSA have noteworthy levels of abuse potential, e.g. caffeine, nicotine, nutmeg, various antihistamines, glues, whipped-cream aerosols, salvia, and dextromethorphan (active ingredient in many cough suppressants) (Hanson, 2014; See discussion in FDA 2010b and NIDA, https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/finder/t/160/DrugFacts).</p>
Addiction	<p>Addiction is often used interchangeably with terms such as dependence and substance use disorder (see further on in definitions). Addiction is generally defined as a primary, chronic, neurobiologic disease, with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. It is characterized by behaviors that include one or more of the following: impaired control over drug use, compulsive use, continued use despite harm, and craving. This definition of addiction has been accepted by the American Academy of Pain Medicine, the American Pain Society and the American Society of Addiction Medicine. See also O'Brien, 2011.</p> <p>The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) focuses more on the research and mechanisms of addiction in its definition. It defines addiction as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences. It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain—they change its structure and function. These brain changes can be long-lasting, and can lead to the harmful behaviors seen in people who abuse drugs.</p>

Term	Definition
	NIDA, and many others, consider addiction to be equivalent to a severe substance use disorder as defined in the APA DSM-5 (see https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/media-guide/science-drug-abuse-addiction-basics).
Eight Factors of the CSA which must be analyzed for scheduling recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Actual and relative potential for abuse (2) Scientific evidence of its pharmacological effects (3) State of the current scientific knowledge regarding the drug (4) History and current pattern of abuse (5) Scope, duration, and significance of abuse (6) Public health risk (7) Psychic or physiologic dependence potential (8) Whether the drug is an immediate precursor of a controlled substance
Controlled Substances Act Drug Schedules	<p>Placement of a substance in the CSA is often referred to as being “scheduled” because it must be placed in one of the five drug schedules based on the 8-Factor Analysis of the CSA.</p> <p>Schedule I (C-I): Substances that do not have an accepted medical use and have a high abuse potential and/or were designated for C-I in the 1970 CSA, e.g., heroin, LSD, GHB, “bath salts,” cannabis. Special DEA license and other requirements are required for research.</p> <p>Schedules II-V: For substances (drugs) that have an accepted medical use (typically approved for medical use by the FDA). C-II is for substances with the highest abuse and physical dependence potential and overall risk characterization; C-V is for substances with the lowest abuse potential and lowest dependence potential and risk.</p> <p>C-II includes morphine, amphetamine, pentobarbital, methadone, oxycodone, nabilone, phencyclidine.</p> <p>C-III includes buprenorphine, ketamine, secobarbital, Xyrem, dronabinol, chlorphentermine.</p> <p>C-IV includes tramadol, diazepam, phenobarbital, mazindol, pentazocine, sibutramine, butorphanol.</p> <p>C-V includes low dose codeine, lacosamide, pregabalin.</p>
Kratom	A plant of the species <i>Mitragyna speciosa</i> , including its leaves, and any product derived solely from this plant, including kratom powder and tea brewed from kratom. Two alkaloid components of kratom are MG and 7-OH-MG. Scheduling either or both of these alkaloids under CSA would also have the effect of

Term	Definition
	controlling kratom and kratom products. In this analysis, the term “kratom” will be used as the umbrella term to refer to the plant product, its extracts, MG, 7-OH-MG, and/or manufactured products that include any of the foregoing, unless more specific terms (e.g., “MG” or “leaves”) are used.
Substance Use Disorder (Drug Dependence)	“Substance Use Disorder” formerly termed “Dependence” by the APA is a cluster of cognitive, behavioral, and physiological symptoms indicating that the individual continues use of the substance despite significant substance-related problems. Substance Use Disorder requires a pattern of repeated self-administration that can result in tolerance, withdrawal, and compulsive drug taking behavior. Specific diagnostic criteria are listed in the DSM-5 (APA, 2013). DSM-III and DSM-IV had included a less severe form of dependence termed abuse (APA, 1980, 1994) which was discarded in DSM-5.
Overdose or drug poisoning death	<p>At a general level, the term overdose can and is loosely used by individuals, the media, and often health care professionals any time that a substance was used in greater than intended amounts and/or produced undesirable effects attributed to the amount of the substance. Use of the term overdose as a cause of death is unfortunately also often loosely used, and this is not helpful in efforts to document actual cause of death, analyze trends, or guide efforts to control and prevent such effects, particularly if the attribution was incorrect. Many substance-related overdose deaths involve combinations of substances such as alcohol, sedatives, and opioids and it is often not clear which substance should be listed as the primary cause of death (Gudin et al., 2013; Rudd et al., 2016; Ossiander, 2014). Furthermore, other physical conditions and disease states may contribute to death associated with drug administration.</p> <p>Thus, many factors contribute to determining whether a death resulted from sufficient drug exposure to justify considering the death a drug poisoning death, and to which drug or substance the death should be attributed if it is plausible that more than one substance was taken. Forensic toxicology experts and medical examiners recommend a variety of criteria to determine the most appropriate description of the involvement of a substance in the death, but these are not always followed. Thus, deaths attributed in the media as an overdose due to one</p>

Term	Definition
	<p>specific substance on the basis that the substance was present may be incorrectly attributed to overdose. The following categorizations of the nature or level of involvement of a substance in a death are used in many medical examiner and emergency medicine reports:</p> <p>Causative: The substance is unequivocally responsible for illness or death.</p> <p>Probable cause of death: Death is a known complication of the administered substance and the clinical picture is in keeping with previous experience and reports, provided other causes of death have been reasonably eliminated.</p> <p>Possible cause of death: The clinicopathologic picture could be caused by the drug in question, but it could just as easily be caused by some other process found in the decedent; assigning the drug in question as the cause of death would be unique and warrant publication in the medical literature.</p> <p>Coincidental: The substance happens to be present but has no bearing on illness or death.</p> <p>Negative: The substance is not detected.</p> <p>(See discussion in http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1680257-overview#a9; Cone et al., 2003, 2004; FDA, 2010a).</p>
Tolerance	<p>Tolerance is defined for diagnostic purposes by the APA (2013) as the need for greatly increased amounts of the substance to achieve intoxication (or the desired effect) or a markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of the substance (FDA, 2010a).</p>

Term	Definition
Withdrawal	<p>Withdrawal is defined for diagnostic purposes by the APA (2013) as follows: The essential feature is the development of a substance-specific problematic behavioral change, with physiological and cognitive concomitants, that is due to the cessation or reduction in heavy and prolonged substance use.</p> <p>Withdrawal symptoms, which are generally opposite of the acute effects of the substance, vary greatly across the classes of substance, and separate criteria sets for withdrawal are provide for most classes (FDA, 2010a).</p> <p>Note that pharmacologists generally consider withdrawal signs and symptoms to be the consequence of physical dependence and a measure of physical dependence. Physical dependence is the state of adaptation or neuroadaptation (tolerance) in which relatively normal functioning has come to be dependent upon continued drug administration. This is sometimes described as “the resetting of homeostatic mechanisms in response to chronic drug exposure” (e.g., O’Brien, 1996, 2011).</p> <p>The presence of withdrawal does not necessarily mean that the person was addicted as defined earlier or had a diagnosable substance use disorder by APA DSM-5 criteria. For example, many opioid treated pain patients develop tolerance and physical dependence and must be gradually tapered off their medication to minimize withdrawal discomfort yet show no evidence of craving, drug seeking, or behaviors indicative of substance use disorder or addiction. Furthermore, individuals can become physically dependent on the effects of a drug used for lowering blood pressure (FDA, 2010a) but which do not cause substance use disorders or addiction. Caffeine may cause APA DSM-5 diagnosable intoxication and withdrawal disorders, but the DSM-5 does not include substance use disorder category for caffeine because the clinical significance of chronic caffeine use and diagnostic criteria have not been established (Hasin et al., 2013) as would be needed to distinguish a substance use disorder from a common life-style and or life enhancing behavior.</p>

1 Summary, Interpretation, and Discussion of Abuse Potential Data

We have developed this summary analysis of the eight factors (8FA) of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to determine if placement of kratom or its alkaloids, mitragynine (MG) or 7- Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH-MG) in the CSA is warranted, and the impact such placement would have on the public health. Equally importantly, we are developing this review to assist the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in their efforts to find the most appropriate regulatory framework to permit appropriate use, minimize unintended effects, encourage research, and contribute to the enhancement of public health.

Although MG and 7-OH-MG have sometimes been referred to as “opioids,” in this document the term “opioid” will only be used to refer to molecules and products that are opioids as defined by the CSA, which identifies opioids as substances with addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine, or substances capable of conversion into drugs with such liability. See 21 USC 802(18); *see also* 21 USC 812(c) (scheduling opium, opium derivatives, and opiates, including opium extracts and derivatives of thebaine); 21 CFR 1308.12 (same). This definition excludes kratom and its alkaloids.¹ It is clear that the abuse potential and harmfulness of kratom and its alkaloids are substantially lower than that of morphine and other opioids and differ in other ways as well, such as physiologic manifestations. In fact, as discussed in this review and in other authoritative reviews, the mitragynines have unique and mixed actions that include mild or “caffeine-like” stimulant effects at low to moderate levels of consumption, and are more likely to enhance occupational performance and social interactions than to interfere with such. In this analysis, the term “kratom” will be used as the umbrella term to refer to the plant product, its extracts, MG, 7-OH-MG, and/or manufactured products that include any of the foregoing, unless more specific terms (e.g., “MG” or “leaves”) are used.

Mitragyna speciosa is a tropical deciduous tree within the coffee family (*Rubiaceae*) that is indigenous to Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam. Traditionally Southeast Asia laborers have used small quantities of kratom throughout the workday for the energizing and minor pain-relieving (minor aches and pains) effects. Kratom has been safely consumed as a dietary supplement, a natural remedy, and in food preparation in Southeast Asia for centuries (Tanguay,

¹ This is also consistent with DEA’s prior determination that emergency scheduling, reserved for substances other than those already controlled in the CSA, including those defined as opioids, was an available statutory pathway for control of kratom, including MG and 7-OH-MG.

2011). It generally is consumed orally in the form of consumer brewed tea-like preparations and powdered kratom leaves that are placed in the mouth or on other foods and are washed down with a liquid. In Southeast Asia, chewing fresh leaves and sometimes dried leaves is also very common, and there are many variants on liquid preparations and some swallowable semisolid preparations made by consumers and various vendors. There is very little evidence demonstrating kratom use through other routes of administration that predominate for opioids in Southeast Asia (e.g., smoking and injecting) despite the long history of wide-spread consumption of kratom. Similarly, in the US, there is little evidence of kratom consumption in forms other than liquid preparations or powdered leaf material that is swallowed with food or liquids. This is in striking contrast to what has been observed for opioids, stimulants, cannabis, nicotine, and other substances of abuse. In fact, for opioids in particular, FDA has actively sought to incentivize the development of products resistant to tampering due to the common and dangerous practice of tampering with oral opioid medications for abuse by nasal insufflation, smoking, and injecting (FDA, 2015; Schnoll and Henningfield, 2016).

The scientific and ethnographic literature often describes consumption as primarily motivated by the “useful,” “beneficial,” “labor sustaining,” “therapeutic,” “mood” and “well-being” enhancing, and “instrumental” benefits, as well as dependence (Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016). The rates of dependence among kratom users in Southeast Asia are not known; however, as discussed in Factor 5, kratom consumers and others regard the practice as more benign and more likely to enhance occupational demands and social functioning in contrast to opioid use which is generally regarded as impairing occupational and social functions (Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016). There are parallels in reported motivation between consumption of kratom and consumption of coffee, tea, and other caffeinated beverages, which are often reportedly used for sustaining performance and for alerting effects, mood enhancement, weight control, relief of headaches, and other benefits (Addicott, 2014; Borota et al., 2014; Cappelletti et al., 2015; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013). As with caffeinated beverages, high dose chronic kratom consumption can lead to use consistent with dependence with difficulty abstaining, as well as apparent withdrawal symptoms. Such high dose chronic consumption of kratom appears to be mostly limited to Southeast Asia and relatively uncommon in the US (e.g., Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013).

The intertwining of factors that include consumption for benefit and life-style enhancement along with varying degrees of dependence, whether for caffeinated beverage consumption or kratom consumption, demonstrates the importance of distinguishing between volitional lifestyle and life enhancing consumption, and “dependence” or “addiction.” As is the case with consumption of caffeinated beverages, kratom consumption is not commonly associated with adverse health effects (other than minor gastrointestinal discomfort that serves to limit pleasure and consumption), and thus consumption appears rarely to be occurring “in the face of harm or personal or recurrent social problems,” which is a common defining feature of substance use disorders as defined by the American Psychiatric Association (2013) or by other

definitions of drug dependence or addiction (American Psychiatric Association 1994; World Health Organization, 1992; American Society for Addiction Medicine, 2016; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2016).

These factors taken together for caffeine contribute to the reason that the DSM-5, as in earlier editions, does not formally recognize caffeine substance use disorder even though it includes criteria for diagnosis of caffeine intoxication and withdrawal disorders (APA, 2013). Similarly, whereas the opinion of the authors of this analysis is that kratom, like caffeine, can cause dependence if taken in very large quantities (Henningfield, 2015; Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Lanier et al., 2016; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016) and “it also carries some abuse liability” (Ward et al., 2011, p. 1001), at least in the US, consumption is generally considered volitional and for the general and/or specific desired effects associated with consumption, as is the case with caffeinated products (Henningfield, 2015).

Serious substance abusers seem to agree that kratom is not a preferred drug of abuse. Evaluations posted on websites and discussion groups where persons who abuse drugs share information report mild and relatively slowly onsetting effects. Their experiences often include both desired and undesired effects that fall far short of what can be readily produced by prototypic drugs of abuse as discussed in Factor 5 of this report. Consistent with this is the virtual absence of evidence that kratom consumption is a significant or serious public health problem or has emerged as a form of substance abuse on any major national US drug monitoring surveillance system, as summarized in Factors 4 and 6 of this report. The lack of public health problems or abuse is despite the fact that there has been widespread consumption of kratom by consumers for more than two decades in the US, and likely consumption among some populations for decades longer.

After an analysis of available data and information, it is clear that kratom, like caffeine, nicotine, dextromethorphan, many antihistamines, antidepressants, and other substances² sold as consumer products and/or as medicines, not to mention various solvents, inhalants, and glues, share limited evidence of characteristics that could be used to support placement in the CSA if that was a predetermined objective. However, such a conclusion would require an extremely selective reading of the evidence that discounts the many mitigating factors in their use patterns. Moreover, whether such substances, including kratom, *should* be so controlled is a more complicated issue and

² Including alcohol and tobacco, but tobacco products and alcoholic beverages are exempted from CSA scheduling by the 1970 CSA itself. 21 USC 802(6) (“The term ‘controlled substance’ means a drug or other substance, or immediate precursor, included in schedule I, II, III, IV, or V of part B of this subchapter. The term does not include distilled spirits, wine, malt beverages, or tobacco, as those terms are defined or used in subtitle E of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.”).

one that must consider the overall public health assessment that is part of the CSA eight factor analysis. There is ample precedent from many other substances and products that share characteristics with certain controlled substances, but have not been placed under the CSA and which are regulated through other statutory and regulatory authorities to promote safe and appropriate consumption and to minimize unintended and harmful effects. These include dextromethorphan, nicotine smoking cessation aids, and caffeine (e.g., Consumer Healthcare Products Association, 2010; Food and Drug Administration, 1995, 1996, 2010b; Henningfield, 2015; Lanier, Fant, Cone, and Henningfield, 2016; Meredith, Juliano, Hughes, and Griffiths, 2013; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2016a).

This analysis also recognizes that the present situation is different from a typical scheduling analysis for a product developed as a drug for FDA approval. Rather, this analysis must address the evidence concerning various kratom preparations and products that have been used for centuries in Southeast Asia and decades in the US. In the US, there are an estimated several million users purchasing products from more than 10,000 retail outlets with an estimated annual market of 207 million dollars (Botanical Education Alliance, 2016). Consumers include immigrants and their families from Southeast Asia where consumption is widespread as a natural remedy and in traditional food preparation. Anecdotal evidence suggests that such consumption has existed in the US for several decades. The more general consumption across the US has largely developed in the past two decades.

The purpose of this document is to review the data related to the abuse potential and toxicity of *Mitragyna speciosa* (also known as kratom) and its primary alkaloids, mitragynine (MG) and 7-hydroxy-mitragynine (7-OH-MG), and the relevance of those data to the doses found in kratom.

Following is a summary of the main conclusions of this analysis and recommendation:

- 1) Placement of kratom in the CSA is not warranted from a public health perspective and is more likely to cause public health problems that do not presently exist.
- 2) Kratom consumption has not emerged as a public health or medical problem for adults or children despite more than two decades of rapidly increasing consumption by millions of Americans served by approximately 10,000 vendors. Specifically, among the 3-4 publicly documented deaths that have ever been suspected to possibly have involved the consumption of kratom, none have been shown to merit designation as a kratom overdose death and all have involved either other substances or physical or mental health conditions that may have been the primary causes of, or significant contributors to, the death. Remarkably, no deaths, serious adverse effects, or emergency department

exposures have been reported in children. It is important to understand that this conclusion does not mean that such events have never or will never occur, but the signal for a public health problem associated with kratom marketing and consumption is very weak.

- 3) Appropriate regulation of kratom products, whether natural or processed leaves, or manufactured derivatives marketed as dietary supplements, is as important for kratom as it is for products such as coffee, tea, and related extracts that are currently regulated under existing Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA) authority.
- 4) Kratom consumption is widespread across the US and spans more than two decades, but kratom consumption has not emerged as a substance abuse problem in the US as measured by any of the US national substance abuse monitoring surveillance systems or by our nation's networks of substance abuse treatment programs that are constantly adapting to the challenges posed by those seeking treatment for emerging forms of abuse and dependence.
- 5) Current kratom users report being likely to be adversely affected and possibly motivated to seek illicit sources if lawfully marketed kratom were no longer available. This would seem likely to include many Southeast Asian immigrants who are believed to have brought kratom consumption customs with them to the US; however, there has been very little documentation and characterization of kratom use patterns in the US by such populations.
- 6) Kratom consumption appears to be primarily motivated by its perceived effects that enhance well-being, occupational performance, and social interactions, as well as serving as a natural "home remedy" that is preferred by millions of Americans to conventional medicines.
- 7) The foregoing is consistent with the pharmacology of kratom and more specifically its alkaloids (MG and 7-OH-MG), which produce mixed pharmacological effects that are generally mild and caffeine stimulant-like at lower dosages. Consumption does not typically interfere with work or social activities and commitments, and in fact kratom is widely reported in the US, as in Southeast Asia, to contribute to work productivity, quality of life, and social relationships.
- 8) The primary effects of kratom are likely predominantly produced by MG with possible contribution of 7-OH-MG. These two alkaloids have been characterized as including partial mu opioid receptor activity including anti-nociception (pain relief), mild pleasurable effects, and constipation at high doses but an apparent lower risk of constipation at typical levels of consumption as compared to opioids. Respiratory depressant effects appear substantially lower than those produced by opioids – a finding that would be consistent with the absence of verified

kratom caused overdose deaths. Future research should study the respiratory effects of kratom in combination with known respiratory depressants because the absence, or at least very low apparent risk, of kratom overdose poisoning suggests that the effects of such depressants are not substantially enhanced by kratom.

- 9) Injection of very high doses of MG can produce discriminative stimulant and opioid-type reinforcement in rodents; however, these effects only occur at doses that appear far higher than those that could be ingested in a single sitting by humans, and the relevance of such findings to human oral kratom consumption is not clear. In fact, the doses of MG required to produce discriminative stimulant effects and reinforcement in rodents are much higher than the doses that could be easily ingested from kratom. This is in contrast to many other consumer products, including dextromethorphan and nutmeg, in which it is relatively easy to consume enough doses to achieve a reinforcing and/or intoxicating effect.
- 10) In contrast to the effects of increasing the dose of substances of high abuse potential (e.g., opioids, stimulants, and sedatives), increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, and little additional mood enhancement. More research is needed to better characterize the profile and understand the mechanisms of action of kratom.
- 11) Animal studies have demonstrated some signs consistent with physical dependence and withdrawal at what appear to be extraordinarily high dosages of MG. Specifically, laboratory rats were given 30 mg/kg/day i.p., equating to an oral dose of about 990 mg/kg (Yusoff et al., 2016). Humans would need to consume over 800 oral doses of kratom in a single sitting to achieve the same dose of MG. In fact, no evidence has demonstrated production of physical dependence and withdrawal at levels consistent with human use. However, the modest desirability of the effects would seem to make such a heroic effort extremely unlikely because the pleasure derived from consumption does not appear similar in magnitude to that produced by far less costly and readily available doses of typical substances of abuse including marijuana, alcohol, stimulants, sedatives, and opioids. More research is needed to understand the relevance of such findings to human consumption and better characterize kratom among other substances.
- 12) MG and kratom have very low toxicity, and thus a favorable safety profile. There have been few reports of serious adverse events or deaths associated with kratom and for most, the contribution of kratom is not clear. For example, in Sweden in about 2008-2009, a blend of herbals including kratom along with the opioid analgesic O-desmethyltramadol, and possibly co-administration of other drug substances was associated with nine deaths. Tramadol (including O-desmethyltramadol), in contrast to kratom, has been documented to carry a risk

of severe respiratory depression and overdose death. To date, in the US, there have been no confirmed reports of death that can be considered “causatively” due to kratom overdose. How many, if any deaths, are “probably” classified as kratom poisoning deaths is not clear. This is consistent with the far larger and longer Southeast Asian experience of very few serious adverse events. In both the US and Southeast Asia, the low toxicity of kratom is in striking contrast to the experience with opioids.

- 13) With respect to safety, the absence of reports of adverse effects associated with pediatric exposure to kratom is striking given that children under six years of age are considered highly vulnerable and account for many poison control center calls and emergency department visits from exposure to a broad range of household products, over the counter drugs, and prescription drugs including opioids. The total absence of reports of adverse effects in children likely seems due to a combination of the low toxicity of kratom, the distastefulness of the products, and the relatively low concentrations of alkaloids in personal and commercial preparations.
- 14) Taking together basic research findings, available epidemiology, clinical observations, and anecdotal self-reports, very high levels of chronic intake of kratom can cause signs consistent with physiological dependence and withdrawal and some degree of psychological dependence, although any signs consistent with dependence have not been accompanied by use through harm or social detriment. However, in many respects, the factors that appear important in sustaining kratom consumption appear more similar to those that sustain dietary caffeine consumption, namely to better manage fatigue and daily life demands and provide mild effects considered enhancing to quality of life. Further research should help to better characterize kratom as it compares to other substances that affect behavioral and physiological function and the contribution of such effects to consumption and safety.
- 15) There has been little study of the rates, risk, or nature of what might be categorized as a substance use disorder involving kratom in the United States. Anecdotal data, including the testimonials appended to this report, suggest that most use is for life-style enhancement and as a natural remedy for various ailments. Thus, rather than consumption to sustain addiction or to get high, and with little apparent harm to self or others, consumption appears largely to the benefit of individuals. This suggests a similarity with caffeine containing products that certainly can produce dependence and withdrawal but which have not been recognized for a disorder category of dependence or substance use disorder category by the American Psychiatric Association (APA, 2013) because there has not been sufficient documentation of clinical impairment or use despite harmful effects.

- 16) In addition, the partial mu agonist activity of two alkaloids, MG and 7-OH-MG, likely confers some degree of relief of at least minor pain, diarrhea, and coughing, and it is plausible, predicting from what is known of the pharmacology, that high dosages could provide some relief of symptoms of opioid withdrawal; however there has been little systematic study of such potential benefits.
- 17) There appear to be remarkably low risk of serious adverse effects from kratom consumption as compared to opioids and other common drugs of abuse. Further, there is little evidence that kratom products are used by routes other than oral beverage or food consumption. In contrast, opioids and many other drugs of abuse are frequently used by high impact routes such as nasal insufflation, smoking, and injecting. Graduation from oral consumption to such other routes is common for opioids and other substances of abuse but not for kratom.
- 18) Although the primary alkaloids of kratom, MG and 7-OH-MG, may demonstrate some characteristics considered for controlled substance scheduling, as do many other products including caffeine, nicotine, some antihistamines, and alcohol, despite decades of wide-spread consumption, there does not appear to be a public health risk that would warrant their scheduling.
- 19) Consumption of kratom products appears to provide positive benefits such as relief of pain and fatigue without the adverse consequences produced by other products that are used for similar purposes as reported in the appended testimonials and over a century or more of documented consumption in Southeast Asia. For example, liver disease caused deaths associated with the use of acetaminophen is a serious problem in the US, and there are problems of serious GI side effects and cardiovascular problems associated with the use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). At the far extreme, there is the inherent risk of overdose and serious addiction associated with the use of opioids. For those who manage various ailments with kratom instead of such products, the benefit to risk ratio appears favorable.
- 20) Banning or restricting access to kratom products would not only deny current kratom consumers of the benefits they obtain from kratom, but would likely serve to create a substantial illicit market to meet those demands. This illicit market would not be subject to regulation such as by the FDCA and would be more likely to harm public health than to maintain appropriate access through the lawfully regulated marketplace. Schedule I placement would not only restrict access to consumers, it would also severely impede the willingness and ability of researchers to conduct the research that is vital to more thoroughly characterizing the effects, mechanisms of action, and safety of kratom. Keeping appropriately regulated kratom products available in the US appears to be in the interests of public health.

2 Analysis of Kratom under the CSA 8 Factors

The present 8-factor analysis has been developed to determine the appropriateness of CSA scheduling of kratom and/or its alkaloids and derivative products, and if so, the most appropriate schedule for kratom.

Based on all lines of evidence considered in the 8-factor analysis, kratom's potential for abuse, tolerance, and dependence is lower than that of many schedule IV and V drugs and is well within the range of many nonscheduled drugs and substances (e.g., caffeine, nasal nicotine spray, fluoxetine, bupropion, dextromethorphan). Although kratom and its primary alkaloids MG and 7-OH-MG share certain characteristics with controlled substances, as do many nonscheduled substances, there does not appear to be a public health risk that would warrant control of kratom products or their alkaloids under the CSA. Rather, regulation under the FDCA by the FDA would seem the most effective mechanism to ensure continued access to kratom products that are marketed with appropriate oversight.

3 Review of the Eight Factors of the Controlled Substances Act

3.1 Factor 1: Its actual or relative potential for abuse

Definitions of addiction, abuse potential, and other terms, which are provided at the beginning of this report, are important to understand the following analysis. There is no question that consumption of kratom can produce effects that, at least at some doses, people can feel and which are important in their decision to consume kratom. Analysis of Factor 1 will provide part of the basis for characterizing its effect profile with respect to the nature and strength of the effects and the relevance of this for a scheduling recommendation.

Perhaps the most prevailing observations in clinical, scientific, and ethnographic reports from 1930 to 2016 about the reasons for kratom consumption are the functional benefits of kratom consumption to enhance and sustain, if not enable occupational work demands, and as a social interaction enhancer when used together with family and friends. Hassan et al. (2013) attribute most kratom consumption as at least initially motivated by what they, and others, term "instrumental" or "instrumentalized" consumption as a means of achieving work goals and not withdrawing from such obligations.

There is also agreement that at least in Southeast Asia, abuse, dependence, and/or addiction may develop with heavy daily consumption, at least among hard laborers, as seems historically more prevalent there than in the United States, but with the recurrent explanation that this seems heavily driven by work and environmental demands and that, in contrast to daily opioid use (when such comparisons are made), such consumption is more likely associated with beneficial occupational and social outcomes.

More specifically, the scientific and ethnographic literature often describes kratom consumption as primarily motivated by the "useful," "beneficial," "labor sustaining," "therapeutic," "mood" and "well-being" enhancing, and "instrumental" benefits, as well as

dependence (Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016). There are parallels in reported motivation for consumption of coffee and tea and other caffeinated beverages which are often reported as used for sustaining performance, alerting effects and enhancing mood (Addicott, 2014; Borota et al., 2014; Cappelletti et al., 2015; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013). As is the case with caffeinated beverages, at least high dose chronic kratom consumption, as appears more common in Southeast Asia than the US, can lead to signs consistent with dependence with difficulty abstaining, as well as apparent withdrawal symptoms (e.g., Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013). The intertwining of these factors, for caffeinated product consumption as for kratom product consumption, requires close attention to detail in distinguishing “dependence” without harm or negative social effects from “addiction.” In both, only the former has been observed. Another parallel with caffeinated beverages is the fact that common levels of kratom consumption are not commonly associated with adverse health effects. Thus, consumption is not typically “in the face of harm or personal or recurrent social problems” as is a common defining feature of dependence disorders (i.e., “addictive” or “substance use” disorders) as discussed further in this review.

These factors taken together contribute to the reason that the APA DSM-5, as in earlier editions, does not formally recognize caffeine substance use disorder even though it includes criteria for diagnosis of caffeine intoxication and withdrawal disorders (APA, 2013). Similarly, whereas the opinion of the authors of this analysis is that kratom can cause signs consistent with dependence without harm or social problems (Henningfield, 2015; Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Lanier et al., 2016; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016) and “it also carries some abuse liability” at very high doses (Ward et al., 2011, p. 1001), at least in the US, consumption is generally considered volitional and for the general and/or specific desired effects associated with consumption as is the case with caffeinated products (Henningfield, 2015). Both products’ volitional use is not consistent with abuse of the product or a dependence disorder.

The apparent worst case scenario conditions for very heavy consumption appears to have been in Southeast Asia among laborers who were required to work at heavy labor tasks for long hours and often in extremely high heat conditions. Kratom leaves were plentiful and heavily relied upon to enable such work. This was described in 1930, in *The Chemist and the Druggist*, in a short article titled, “Kratom Eaters” that described the effects of chewing 10-30 kratom leaves three times per day by laborers to prolong their ability to be capable of “arduous work” including improved tolerance to endure fatigue and “torrid heat” (Available at https://archive.org/stream/b19974760M2738/b19974760M2738_djvu.txt, accessed November 28, 2016). Note that this quantity of kratom appears extremely high compared to typical kratom consumption, however, the article included no estimate of alkaloid content or nature of the leaves that would permit quantitative comparison to today’s products and practices. Nonetheless, these kratom consumers were considered to be “addicted” by the author, but that definition is not consistent with the contemporary use of the term because, as noted by the author, “the habit is stated not to be harmful since the kratom eater does not change his character.”

Aziz (2014) also credited kratom consumption primarily by workers to increased endurance and stamina, as well as for social reasons. Singh et al. (2014), in a review of dependence and potential withdrawal, also described very heavy consumption among workers but also by many people as a social enhancer with family and friends, with about 79% of such consumers using daily. They stated that “Most users share the belief that it is better to consum[e] Kratom in order to improve work performance than using illicit stimulant-drugs which could also be more expensive.” It was observed that in contrast to the view of opioid users, kratom users were seen as “diligent” and “hardworking” despite the view that they were dependent and many experienced mild symptoms consistent with withdrawal upon termination of use. Similarly, Suwanlert (1975) described “regular kratom users” as having an increased tolerance for work and “increased calm.”

Taken together these observations suggest that consumption is more analogous to the consumption of caffeinated products that makes daily caffeinated beverage consumption so common in the US and globally. These observations are not the pattern of the adverse effects of prototypic addictive drug use on life, health, and society.

3.1.1 Animal Data on Drug Discrimination and Reinforcement

3.1.1.1 Discrimination

Drug discrimination procedures have often been used to help characterize the central nervous system (CNS) effects and predict the abuse potential of new drugs (Ator and Griffiths, 2003), and there is a strong positive relationship between discriminative stimulus effects of drugs in non-humans and the subjective effects of the same drugs in humans (Lelas et al., 2000; McMahon et al., 2002). However, generalization with an active substance known to cause dependence in itself is not necessarily indicative of dependence potential (Ator and Griffiths, 2003). Rather, the results should indicate whether or not kratom and/or its constituent compounds are likely to have subjective effects that are qualitatively similar to that of prototypic drugs of abuse.

There have been no studies of the discriminative stimulus effects of kratom as an herbal product. However, as discussed below, there has been a study of the discriminative stimulus effects of injected MG which showed that doses that would appear extremely large (e.g., an equivalent of over 500 2-ounce bottles of one widely marketed product (VivaZen[®]) if taken orally (Henningfield, 2015)) can provide morphine-like effects in rats. The relevance of the findings for human consumption and regulation are extremely limited because, as discussed below, there are virtually no reports of extraction or injection of its alkaloids or consumption by any other route at this level. The research is solely helpful in better understanding the mechanism of kratom’s constituents.

Harun et al. (2015) investigated the discriminative stimulus effects of MG in rats. The pharmacological mechanism of MG action and its derivative, 7-OH-MG, with a specific focus on opioid receptor involvement was examined in rats trained to discriminate morphine from vehicle. Rats acquired the MG discrimination (15.0 mg/kg, i.p.);

however, approximately 100 trials of training (50 MG and 50 vehicle sessions) were required before the rats could discriminate MG from vehicle. The group of rats trained to discriminate morphine (5.0 mg/kg, i.p.) from vehicle required fewer training trials, i.e. approximately 60 training sessions in total (30 morphine and 30 vehicle). In stimulus generalization tests with a range of MG doses, 3.0 mg/kg, i.p. produced partial generalization to the 15.0 mg/kg, i.p. dose (around 60% MG-appropriate responding), and full generalization to the training dose was found at the 10.0 mg/kg, i.p. dose. MG substituted fully to the morphine discriminative stimulus in a dose-dependent manner, suggesting pharmacological similarities between the two drugs. However, generalization to morphine occurred at the MG dose of 15.0 mg/kg, i.p., and was not seen at the 1 or 3 mg/kg, i.p. dose. This 15 mg/kg i.p. dose would thus equate to an oral dose of about 495 mg/kg³ in rats to produce an effect that resembles 5 mg of injected morphine. Converting this to a human equivalent dose based on body surface area, this would equate to 79.84 mg/kg in humans, or almost 5.6 grams of MG taken orally by a 70 kg human. The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). Based on this, 1 gram of kratom leaves would contain around 15 mg of alkaloids (based on the 1.5% figure), about 9 mg of which would be MG. This would suggest that a human would need to consume 630 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a subjective effect that would fully substitute for morphine – the equivalent of over 500 2-ounce bottles commonly sold in stores. Although kratom leaves also contain smaller quantities of other alkaloids including 7-OH-MG, which is more potent at the mu opioid receptor, impractically large quantities of kratom would have to be consumed, even assuming some subjective effects of these other alkaloids.

As previously noted, generalization with an active substance known to cause dependence in itself is not necessarily indicative of dependence potential (Ator and Griffiths, 2003). The finding that MG substituted to the morphine discriminative stimulus when injected at very high dosages in rats supports the conclusion that the effects of kratom are mediated at least in part by opioid receptors; however, the relevance of these findings to human effects and consumption are limited.

3.1.1.2 Reinforcement

Centrally-acting drugs that produce highly pleasurable (rewarding) or psychologically reinforcing subjective effects in animals and man can lead to craving or addiction and also to diversion and nonmedical abuse, if the effect is strong enough. Many drugs that

³ Based on the calculated absolute oral bioavailability value of 3.03% (Parthasarathy et al., 2010)

are powerful reinforcers in man are also reliably self-administered by various animal species (e.g., rats, dogs, monkeys or baboons; Ator and Griffiths, 2003).

There have been no studies of the reinforcing effects of kratom as an herbal product. However, as discussed below, there has been a study of the reinforcing value of a kratom extract, and studies have examined the reinforcing value of MG when given by injection to animals. The reinforcing value of the extract was less than that of MG. In studies of MG, doses of 5 mg/kg to 10 mg/kg, i.p. were shown to increase conditioned place preference (CPP) relative to placebo. As is the case with the discrimination study, the relevance of this to human consumption is not clear, having involved injections of extremely high doses, far beyond what could reasonably be consumed by a human from current products. Nonetheless, such research is important in helping to understand the mechanisms of action of kratom.

Sufka et al. (2014) also used the CPP model to characterize the psychoactive properties of *Mitragyna speciosa* MeOH extract (50, 100, 300 mg/kg, i.p.), *Mitragyna speciosa* alkaloid-enriched fraction (12.5, 25, 75 mg/kg, i.p.), and MG (5, 10, 30 mg/kg, i.p.) in rats. Rats were given eight counter-balanced drug versus vehicle conditioning trials followed by a preference test conducted under drug-free states. S(+)-amphetamine (1 mg/kg) served as the positive control and haloperidol (0.8, 1.0 mg/kg) served as the negative control in both studies. Rats showed place preference to MG that was similar to that of S(+)-amphetamine. This CPP effect was much less pronounced with the *Mitragyna speciosa* extract and its fraction. The preference scores for the 5 and 30 mg/kg MG groups, but not the 10 mg/kg group, were significantly higher than those for the vehicle.

Yusoff et al. (2016) examined the potential rewarding properties of injected MG using the CPP model. Rats that were conditioned with morphine (10 mg/kg, i.p.) and methamphetamine (1 mg/kg, i.p.) established a significant CPP for the drug-paired chamber. MG induced a significant CPP at doses of 10 mg/kg, i.p. and 30 mg/kg, i.p., but MG doses of 1 mg, i.p. and 5 mg, i.p. did not produce a significant effect.

Taken together, these studies suggest that an injected dose of 5 mg/kg was required to produce conditioned place preference in rats, which would equate to an oral dose of 165 mg/kg. Converting this to a human equivalent dose based on body surface area, this would equate to 26.6 mg/kg in humans, or over 1.8 grams of MG taken orally by a 70 kg human. The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). Based on this, 1 gram of kratom leaves would contain around 15 mg of alkaloids (based on the 1.5% figure), about 9 mg of which would be MG. This would suggest that a human would need to consume around 200 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a reinforcing effect – over 150 2-ounce doses. Although kratom leaves also contain smaller quantities of other alkaloids including 7-OH-MG, which is more potent at the mu opioid receptor, impractically large quantities of kratom would have to be consumed even assuming some subjective effects of these other alkaloids.

3.1.1.3 Relevance of Doses to Humans, and Equivalencies with Other Unscheduled Drugs

In assessing the abuse potential of a particular product, it is important to consider the dose and route of administration. Reports of kratom consumption show that kratom is virtually exclusively consumed via the oral route, and it is likely that it would be very difficult to extract MG from the leaf or powder without extensive experience in chemistry and access to laboratory equipment. In contrast, the rodent research cited in the section above administered the drug via the i.p. route. Oral absorption of MG is slow, prolonged, and was incomplete, with a calculated absolute oral bioavailability value of 3.03% (Parthasarathy et al., 2010). The table below compares the number of units that would be required to achieve discrimination and reinforcement from several over-the-counter products that are currently not controlled.

Table 1. Number of units that would be required to achieve discrimination and reinforcement from several over-the-counter products.

Drug	Discriminable Dose	Reinforcing Dose	Dose in Common Products
Mitragynine	10 mg/kg, i.p. (Harun et al., 2015)	5 mg/kg, i.p. (Sufka et al., 2014)	Around 200 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a reinforcing effect – over 150 2-ounce doses
Caffeine	(N=7)- Three subjects discriminated 56 mg, three discriminated 18 mg and one discriminated 10 mg (Griffiths et al., 1990)	At the two lowest doses (100 and 200 mg) 5 of the 12 subjects demonstrated significant caffeine positive reinforcement at one or both doses (Griffiths & Woodson, 1988)	Excedrin Extra Strength Caplets – 65 mg/caplet 10 Hour Energy Shot- 422 mg 5 Hour Energy- 200 mg Brewed coffee- 163 mg/8 oz Monster energy drink- 160 mg/16 oz Coca Cola- 34 mg/12 oz (http://www.caffeineinformer.com/the-caffeine-database)
Dextromethorphan	No human studies 30 mg/kg, i.p. in rats (Gavend et	Doses of 400 and 800 mg/70 kg increased drug liking scores. 92%	Robitussin Maximum Strength 10 mg//5 ml – 480 mg/8 oz bottle Mucinex DM Max Strength – 60 mg/tablet. 840 mg/14 count package

Drug	Discriminable Dose	Reinforcing Dose	Dose in Common Products
	al., 1995)	of subjects reported 400 mg/70 kg as feeling like they had received a “classic hallucinogen” (Reissig et al., 2012)	
Diphenhydramine	In rats, partial generalization to cocaine (78%) at 17.8 mg/kg (Gauvin, 1995)	400 mg increased end of day scores on liking and take drug again (Preston et al., 1992)	Sleep aid liquidcaps – 50 mg/cap, package of 32 (1600 mg total) Equate nighttime sleep aid – 25 mg-100 capsules per box (2500 mg)
Non-Alcoholic Beer	55% of subjects could be trained to discriminate 0.2 g/kg alcohol from placebo (Jackson et al., 2001)	Self-administration of ethanol at doses of 5-7 grams (Bigelow et al., 1977)	In the United States, one "standard" drink contains roughly 14 grams of pure alcohol, which is found in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 ounces of regular beer, which is usually about 5% alcohol • 5 ounces of wine, which is typically about 12% alcohol • 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits, which is about 40% alcohol O'Douls- 0.4%- 1.12g
Nicotine	<1 mg by smoked, oral “chew”, or intravenous in humans	<1 mg by smoked, oral “chew”, or intravenous in humans (Henningfield et al., 2005; US DHHS, 2010)	All common tobacco products contain and deliver substantially higher doses but are typically used only as much as necessary to produce the desired effects. Former Surgeon General Koop, the first SG to conclude that nicotine met all criteria as an addictive drug, testified on behalf of allowing then prescription nicotine gum and patches to be

Drug	Discriminable Dose	Reinforcing Dose	Dose in Common Products
			approved for over the counter sales to make it more readily available for consumers to use as they desired to quit smoking.

It should also be noted that there are a variety of other herbal and consumer products that likely have some reinforcing effects, but are not controlled substances. For example, nutmeg contains myristicin, a natural compound that can produce hallucinogenic effects if taken in doses of around five teaspoons. When taking large amounts of nutmeg, it may take hours for auditory hallucinations to occur. This could result in increased overdose risk if the user thinks they haven't taken enough.

There are a variety of herbs and products with sedative effects, including the following:

- Chamomile
- Passionflower
- Ashwagandha
- Schisandra
- California Poppy
- Hops
- Kava
- Lavender
- Lemon Balm
- St. John's Wort
- Red Clover
- Catnip
- Valerian
- Motherwort
- Skullcap
- Poppy seeds
- Hemp seeds/oil

Herbs that are commonly used and sometimes abused for energy bursts include guarana and kola nut, both of which contain caffeine.

Poppy seeds are harvested from the opium poppy and contain a mixture of opium alkaloids (e.g., morphine, codeine, thebaine). Poppy seeds are used as foodstuffs in many parts of the world. Depending upon the seed source, harvesting practices, and washing procedures, the content of opium alkaloids in poppy seed is widely variable. A serving of poppy seeds (e.g., poppy seed bagel) may contain a few micrograms to a few milligrams of opium alkaloids. Some foodstuffs contain larger amounts of poppy seeds (strudel prepared with poppy seeds). Due to the variable alkaloid content in poppy seeds, it is not possible to estimate what a standard serving of poppy seeds contains in terms of morphine content, but according to reports, the content has been high enough to trigger workplace drug testing for some workers who consumed foods with poppy seeds (Thevis et al., 2003; Lachenmeier et al., 2010; Moeller et al., 2004; U.S. Anti Doping Agency, 2014).

Hemp seeds and oil are harvested from the cannabis plant and may contain tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive ingredient in cannabis material. Normally, the THC in these products are quite low, but some individuals have tested positive for THC metabolites following ingestion of these products, most notably, with hemp oil products. DEA regulation was recently instituted that exempted hemp oil containing any amount of THC from the CSA if the hemp oil was not used or intended for human consumption. 21 CFR 1308.35.

3.1.2 Summary of Factor 1

The findings above suggest that the main alkaloid in kratom, MG, provides some evidence of abuse potential when injected at extremely high dosages in animals. Specifically, the data suggest that MG shares some discriminative stimulus effects with morphine in rats when injected at very high doses, and that the substance produces reinforcing effects. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, it would be extremely difficult to isolate the MG from kratom leaves to make an injectable preparation of MG. Further, the amount of MG in kratom leaves is only about 9 mg per gram, and the oral bioavailability of MG is quite low (3.03%). This would suggest that huge quantities of kratom would need to be consumed to obtain the effects seen after taking a pure mu opioid such as morphine. Thus, although important as basic research, the relevance to human oral consumption is limited. Furthermore, in contrast to the effects of increasing the dose of substances of high abuse potential (e.g., prototypic opioids, stimulants, and sedatives), increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, and little additional mood enhancement.⁴

In addition, as discussed in this section and elsewhere in this report, it appears that the vast majority of kratom consumption is for perceived benefits and social/occupational enhancement, and not for the euphoric effects of the product.

3.2 Factor 2: Scientific evidence of its pharmacological effect, if known

The pharmacology of kratom was reviewed recently by Warner et al. (2016) and some of this discussion was drawn from that review as well as Henningfield (2015). Over 40

⁴ These observations are limited by the absence of classic human abuse potential studies, such as the ones in which the authors of this report are expert (e.g., FDA, 2010; Schuster and Henningfield, 2003), but are consistent with clinical, ethnographic, and internet reports, as well as the pharmacology as known to date and discussed further on this this report (Raffa, 2015; Henningfield, 2015; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016).

different constituents have been isolated from kratom (EMCDDA, 2015; Gogineni et al., 2014), and kratom leaves have been found to contain over 25 alkaloids (Tanguay, 2011; Hassan et al., 2013). The alkaloids MG and 7-OH-MG are believed to be the primary active alkaloids in the plant (Tanguay, 2011; Warner, 2016). The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract with 7-OH-MG accounting for only up to 2% (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). In a recent study by Kruegel et al. (2016), the authors found only trace quantities of 7-OH-MG (by mass spectrometry) in their extractions of the raw plant material, and concluded that it is doubtful that 7-OH-MG is a universal constituent of all *Mitragyna speciosa* preparations and is unlikely to generally account for the psychoactive properties of this plant.

Mitragynine is an indole-containing alkaloid, structurally similar to yohimbine, a component of the common dietary supplement yohimbe (Hassan et al., 2013; Prozialeck et al., 2012; Rosenbaum et al., 2012). Both mitragynine and 7-OH exhibit nanomolar binding affinities for the μ -opioid receptors and possess functional activity in tissue assays (Takayama et al., 2002; Matsumoto et al., 2004). In addition, the antinociceptive effects of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG in several rodent models are also inhibited by naloxone (Takayama et al., 2002; Matsumoto et al., 2004; Matsumoto et al., 1996). However, mitragynine was found to produce markedly less respiratory depression than codeine (Macko et al., 1972).

In animal models, mitragynine exhibits activity on supraspinal μ - and δ -opioid receptors causing its characteristic analgesic effects (Rosenbaum et al., 2012; Hassan et al., 2013; EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). With consideration to the interactions at the cellular level, studies suggest that neurotransmitter release from the nerve endings at the vas deferens is inhibited (Prozialeck, 2012). This inhibition is suggested to occur through the obstruction of neuronal calcium (Ca^{2+}) channels (Hassan et al., 2013; Philipp, 2010). Blocked stimulation of serotonergic 5-HT_{2A} receptors and stimulation of postsynaptic α -2 adrenergic receptors are thought to contribute to stimulant activity (Rosenbaum et al., 2012; EMCDDA, 2015).

In animal models, additional psychoactivity is said to exist as a consequence of binding affinities exceeding that of morphine at the δ - and κ -opioid central receptors (Prozialeck, 2012). Moreover, 7-OH-MG provides high opioid receptor affinity with agonist properties (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). While polarity is increased due to the additional hydroxyl group on 7-OH-MG as compared to mitragynine, increased activity of 7-OH-MG is otherwise not well understood (Prozialeck, 2012).

Unlike the preclinical models, Kruegel et al. (2016) showed that at the human opioid receptors (human μ -, δ -, and κ -opioid receptors), mitragynine acted as a partial agonist at human μ -opioid receptors ($\text{EC}_{50} = 339 \pm 178 \text{ nM}$; maximal efficacy (E_{max}) = 34%). In contrast, at human κ -opioid receptors, mitragynine was a competitive antagonist ($\text{IC}_{50} = 8.5 \pm 7.6 \text{ }\mu\text{M}$; $\text{pA}_2 = 1.4 \pm 0.40 \text{ }\mu\text{M}$), fully inhibiting the activity of the reference agonist U-50,488. Similarly, mitragynine acted as an antagonist at human δ -opioid receptors, but with very low potency. The other major natural alkaloids paynantheine, speciogynine,

and speciociliatine, showed no measurable agonist activity at any of the human opioid receptors at concentrations up to 100 μ M, and only weak antagonist effects were observed. This partial agonist activity is consistent with the observation that mitragynine was found to produce markedly less respiratory depression than codeine (Macko et al., 1972), as well as the lack of respiratory depression-related deaths discussed elsewhere in this report.

7-OH-MG was also characterized and found to be a potent, partial agonist at human μ -opioid receptors ($EC_{50} = 34.5 \pm 4.5$ nM; $E_{max} = 47\%$). Further, it acted as a competitive antagonist at both human κ -opioid receptors ($IC_{50} = 7.9 \pm 3.7$ μ M; $pA_2 = 490 \pm 131$ nM) and human δ -opioid receptors ($IC_{50} > 10$ μ M). The partial agonist activity of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG at the human receptors was further confirmed in antagonist experiments, as both compounds were able to partially inhibit the response elicited by the full agonist [D-Ala₂, N-Me-Phe₄, Gly-ol₅]-enkephalin (DAMGO). As with MG, the partial agonist activity of 7-OH-MG is consistent with the lack of respiratory depression-related deaths discussed elsewhere in this report.

Although MG (Warner et al., 2016; Hassan et al., 2013) and sometimes 7-OH-MG (Matsumoto et al., 2005) have been reported as 13 times more potent than morphine, many of the references to support this figure appear to not actually report this finding. In fact, a wide range of findings have been reported for MG and 7-OH-MG related to relative potency (the amount needed to produce an effect) and strength (the maximal effect, e.g. guinea pig ileum muscle twitch, or analgesic effect on mice placed on an uncomfortably but not burning hot plate). These are often reported in article abstracts and in turn by the media as “morphine” or “opioid” like effects with little context for what was actually studied, what was found, and its relevance or lack thereof to human use and effects.

For example, Warner et al. (2016) cites Rosenbaum et al. (2012) to support the statement that MG has “approximately 13 times the potency of morphine in regards to its opioid-like effects”. In turn, Rosenbaum et al. (2012) cite Vicknasingam (2010) and Matsumoto et al. (2005). Vicknasingam (2010) states “Two alkaloids in kratom—mitragynine and alkaloid 7-hydroxymitragynine—act as agonists to supraspinal μ - and δ -opioid receptors and produce effects similar to morphine. In fact, the latter [i.e., 7-OH-MG] exhibited about 13 times higher potency than morphine....” Matsumoto’s only discussion of the 13-times figure says “7-hydroxymitragynine inhibited electrically induced contraction through the opioid receptors, and its effect was about 13-fold more potent than morphine.” Thus it appears that 7-OH-MG (not MG) may exhibit effects 13 times greater than morphine on some effects, but the relative potency of MG appears less than that of morphine. For example, Watanabe et al (1997) states “Mitragynine was 10 fold less potent than morphine.” It is also reported to be 5-fold weaker than morphine in analgesic tests in mice and had a potency ratio of inhibitory effect on ileum contraction that was 6-fold less potent than that of morphine (Watanabe et al., 1997). Taken together these studies confirm that these molecules, which the investigators note are structurally distinct from opioids, do produce some opioid like effects. Furthermore, their relative potency and strength are far from fully characterized

in laboratory models and is need of further research. Research is also need to assess the generality of such laboratory findings to human use and effect.

It should be noted that potency is often improperly equated with strength with respect to abuse potential and toxicity when all it really means is the relative quantity of a substance that is required to produce a specific effect, and not the strength of the effect. Thus, for example, nicotine appears to be at least 5-10 times more potent than cocaine in producing certain cocaine-like effects in animals and humans, including reinforcement (Goldberg et al., 1983). However, pure nicotine, despite its ready over the counter and commercial availability over most of the 20th century and presently, has never emerged as a substance of abuse or a public health threat in its own right. This is consistent with the fact that the strength of nicotine as a euphoriant and the generality of conditions in which it serves as a strong reinforcer is less than for cocaine (Goldberg et al., 1983; Henningfield & Goldberg, 1985; Henningfield et al., 2016). Moreover, despite tens of millions of users of nicotine and everyday exposures to nicotine-containing products by children and infants in the US, and many reports to poison control centers and emergency departments, there have been only a few deaths in children or adults that were attributed primarily to nicotine. For example, between January 2012 and April 2015, there was only one death associated with a nicotine or tobacco product among children under 6 years reported to the National Poison Data System (Kamboj et al., 2016).

Taken together, although progress has been made in understanding the pharmacology of kratom and MG and 7-OH-MG in particular, more research is needed to fully characterize the mechanisms of action that contribute to a novel profile of some opioid-like and stimulant-like effects that may be important in the consumption of kratom products. In the absence of clarity about the pharmacological mode of action, observed effects are the most reliable guide to the impact of kratom.

3.3 Factor 3: The state of current scientific knowledge regarding the drug or other substance

Kratom leaves and crushed or powdered leaves are readily available on the internet and in stores in most states, but this material is not reported to be used by nasal insufflation, smoking, or intravenously (in contrast to opioids and stimulants that are commonly used by such diverse routes to speed absorption and intensify their effects). In addition to the apparently low potential to produce strong effects sought by persons who abuse drugs, the physical nature of the leaf material with its high ratio of cellulose fiber likely deters use by such routes because large amounts of material would need to be placed in the nose or smoked to produce effects. By analogy, caffeinated products are also not reportedly used by injection, smoking, or snorting likely in part because of relatively low potential to produce strong euphoriant effects as compared to cocaine (Garrett and Griffiths, 2001).

It would not likely be simple or inexpensive to extract and concentrate the MG or 7-OH-MG from kratom leaves, and it would require sophisticated equipment and chemistry training, but it would be theoretically possible. In Southeast Asia where the raw material is plentiful and there are many clandestine laboratories for synthesizing substances for abuse, kratom-derived products have not been a target, likely due to the apparently low abuse liability of mitragynine and limited euphoriant-like effects produced by the product. Furthermore, in contrast to the effects of increasing the dose of substances of high abuse potential (e.g., prototypic opioids, stimulants and sedatives), increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, and little additional mood enhancement.

In rodents, the analgesic effects of mitragynine have been evaluated in hot plate and tail-pinch tests. Administration of mitragynine (35 mg/kg) increased the pain threshold in hot plate tests, and its effects were inhibited by naloxone (1 mg/kg, i.p.) (Shamima et al., 2012). 7-OH-MG has also been reported to produce analgesia when evaluated in in vivo pharmacological studies. For example, Matsumoto et al. (2006) reported that when 7-OH-MG was administered subcutaneously (s.c.) in mice, there was an increase in the pain threshold for both the tail-flick (ED₅₀ = 0.80 mg/kg, s.c.) and hot plate (ED₅₀ = 0.93 mg/kg, s.c.) tests, and its effects were inhibited by naloxone. Comparatively, the ED₅₀ of morphine (s.c.) in tail-flick and hot-plate tests are 4.57 mg/kg and 4.08 mg/kg, respectively (Matsumoto et al., 2006; Matsumoto and Horie, 2014).

The pharmacodynamic effects of kratom have been summarized in reviews (see Warner et al., 2016; Prozialeck, 2012). Kratom users can expect to experience full effects in about 30–60 min after ingestion, although onset can be noticeable within about 10–20 min. The half-lives of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG are about 3.5 and 2.5 h, respectively. Both are eliminated from the body primarily with the urine (Prozialeck, 2012; Neerman et al., 2013). The pharmacokinetics following oral administration of mitragynine in humans has been proposed as a two-compartment model based on the observed kinetics in ten healthy human male volunteers (Trakulsrichai et al., 2015). Certain conditions such as prior food consumption or taking kratom in capsule form can delay the initial response. The effects of kratom typically last about 5–7 h, with the strongest effects at about 2–4 h after ingestion, although weak aftereffects can be felt as late as the next day (Rosenbaum et al., 2012; Prozialeck, 2012; Scott et al., 2014; Maruyama et al., 2009). Current pharmacokinetic data in both animals and humans is limited, and there appears to be a significant variability within each species and differences between species in terms of mitragynine pharmacokinetics.

Approximately 1–5 g of raw leaves, which is defined as a low to moderate dose, will yield mild stimulant effects (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). The onset of effects begins to be experienced about 10 min or more after using a few grams of dried leaves (EMCDDA, 2015). This dosage amount is often related to the stimulant effects commonly used by labor workers in Southeast Asia to fight fatigue (Prozialeck, 2012). Not only has increased work capacity been reported by users, but alertness, sociability, and increased sexual desire are said to occur (EMCDDA, 2015). At this dose, the user

may also possess normal to slightly contracted pupils and blushing. Unwanted side effects are generally minimal; however, anxiety and internal agitation have been described (Prozialeck, 2012).

Using from 5 to 15 g of kratom leaves may provide the user with pain and opioid withdrawal symptom relief (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). Both mitragynine and 7-OH-MG yield analgesic and antinociceptive effects. Euphoria is more often achieved at this higher level, but these effects tend to be less intense as compared with opioid drugs (Prozialeck, 2012).

When exceeding 15 g of kratom leaves, one would expect to experience stupor, mimicking the effects associated with opioids (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). Initially, sweating, dizziness, nausea, and dysphoria will often result. These effects quickly subside and are followed by calmness and a dreamlike state (EMCDDA, 2015).

Frequent users of kratom, primarily in Southeast Asia, have displayed instances of the atypical symptoms tremor, anorexia, weight loss, seizures, and psychosis (Hassan et al., 2013; Prozialeck, 2012). Such individuals are likely using high doses of kratom for a prolonged period of time (Hassan et al., 2013; Prozialeck, 2012). The relevance of these potential effects from a public health perspective appears low as suggested in the analysis of Factor 5 and 6; however, research on this issue should be continued and extended.

This analysis is consistent with the conclusions of other recent reviews of the state of kratom science, which reveal a novel substance in need of further research to better understand its mechanisms of action as well as effects, particularly in dosage forms relevant to oral consumption by humans.

3.4 Factor 4: Its history and current pattern of abuse

3.4.1 History

The history of kratom presence and consumption in the US is recent, compared to Southeast Asia, and not well documented. Anecdotal reports, e.g., by Hmong immigrants in the 1980s and 1990, suggest that the Hmong and other immigrants from the Southeast Asia region likely brought kratom consumption practices to the US, and discussions with some have suggested availability in some Asian food product stores for many years (JEH discussions with Hmong community members in Minnesota). However, there has been little documentation of this in the literature other than anecdotal reports (see an anecdote reported in Axelrod and Windell, 2012, p.56). Broader commercial marketing of kratom products in the US by internet and in various health and natural food stores apparently began to increase in the early 2000s. A kratom industry survey estimated that by 2016, there were approximately 10,000 vendors selling kratom products in the US (Botanical Education Alliance, 2016).

Frequency of consumption of kratom, whether by consumption of home brewed liquids or commercial products, appears largely determined by individual preferences and reasons for consumption. For example, United Naturals reported that its average customer purchased and/or reported approximately 2-3 2oz (i.e., two “dose”) bottles per week, whereas other consumers make their own tea-like preparations on a daily basis. See the Appended testimonials collected by the American Kratom Association, which include descriptions of a range of patterns from daily to a few times per week to fit the needs and desires of the respondents. None of the users described consuming massive amounts of tea or hundreds of bottles in a single setting, as would apparently be required to produce the effects seen in the rodent studies described above.

Typical mode of kratom consumption

The most common mode of consumption in the US is in the form of liquids that are either prepared by consumers or purchased as manufactured products, often in small, 2 ounce containers as have become increasingly popular for caffeinated energy based “shot” drinks and other supplements. Consumers who prepare their own liquids use both hot and cold water extraction methods similar to making tea or coffee. Leaf material, which may be whole leaf but more commonly chopped or powdered, can be steeped or boiled, or cold water extracted. Lemon juice or other acids may be added to facilitate extraction. Sugar, honey, and other sweeteners and flavoring ingredients are often added to mask the generally perceived unpleasant and bitter taste of the liquids. A public health benefit of the general distasteful nature of the liquids is probably the discouragement of consumption by children. In fact, given the millions of preparations made in homes and sold by 10,000 vendors throughout the US, this may help contribute to apparently infrequent inadvertent consumption by children and reporting to emergency departments and poison centers in addition to the apparent intrinsic low acute toxicity of the mitragynines as discussed further on.

In Southeast Asia, leaf chewing is common as would be expected given the ready access to trees or inexpensive marketed harvested leaves. There have been some reports of leaf smoking in Southeast Asia but this does not appear common in Southeast Asia where product is readily available or in the US. This is in striking contrast to opioids which are rarely consumed as beverages or in foods and for which the preferred routes of use are smoking, injecting, and by nasal insufflation (“snorting”). There is a striking parallel in fact with respect to the stimulant caffeine, which is almost exclusively consumed in the form of beverages, also used in many foods, but rarely consumed by routes that are typical of other stimulants such as cocaine and amphetamine which are often used by smoking, injecting, and by nasal insufflation. For further comparison, the kratom tree and the coffee tree are both tropical, deciduous, evergreens in the coffee family (Rubiaceae) native to Southeast Asia.

3.4.2 Federal Surveys

Monitoring the Future Survey (MTF) and Treatment Episodes Datasets (TEDS)

Among federal surveys, the youth and young adult targeted MTF survey and the TEDS were evaluated. MTF data are available through 2015 and TEDS through 2013. Neither of these surveys have reported kratom consumption or treatment seeking for kratom dependence, respectively. That does not mean there has been no abuse or kratom dependence treatment seeking; however, it does reflect the absence of signals and the lack of recommendations from affiliate researchers and treatment clinics that kratom abuse or dependence treatment should be added to the surveys at this time. Those systems, like most other such drug use and abuse-related surveillance systems, are designed and implemented so as to capture the emergence in trends of use, abuse and treatment needs. There may be a few years' lag time unless such problems are emerging rapidly and/or are considered public health priorities; however, given that kratom has been used in the US for decades, one would predict that, if kratom were emerging as a public health or abuse problem, it would have been evident from these surveys.

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

The NSDUH is generally considered to be a sensitive indicator of emerging trends in substance abuse, including adoption of new substances, and it includes collection of self-reported new and novel products and substances by its open-ended questions. Thus, although it does not yet include kratom/mitragynine-specific questions, since 2010 through the most recently published data release that covered 2014, there were a total of two (2) kratom mentions (unweighted – not nationally representative). By contrast, and over the same time frame, mentions of oxycodone, heroin, cocaine, amphetamine, marijuana, and other prototypic substances of abuse were in the many thousands. Aspirin mentions ranged from 17 to 22 per year, while diphenhydramine mentions ranged from 12 to 29 per year. See Table 2.

Table 2. Number of Unweighted Cases of Kratom, Aspirin, Diphenhydramine, and Other Substances Reported to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2010-2014.

	NSDUH – Number of Unweighted Cases				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Kratom/Mitragynine [†]	1	0	0	0	1
Oxycodone [§]	2,068	2,097	2,017	1,877	1,835
Heroin [§]	771	826	829	842	946
Cocaine [§]	6,464	6,260	6,009	5,653	6,636
Amphetamine [§]	3,916	4,136	4,113	4,171	4,179
Marijuana [§]	22,842	22,994	22,238	22,163	23,462
Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) [†]	3	5	9	7	3
Diphenhydramine [†]	37	36	23	28	16

[†] unweighted non-medical use case mentions from open-ended response items only

[§] unweighted non-medical use case mentions from drug-specific and open-ended response items

3.4.3 Other Federal Data Sources Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN)

There have been no reports of kratom or mitragynines in the DAWN system; however, since DAWN monitoring ended as of December 31, 2011, all that can be concluded is that DAWN-detected signals were not occurring before 2012. It is telling, however, that when clearly high risk products such as fentanyl emerged even in small geographic areas, DAWN quickly picked up associated problems. Kratom likely had at least a decade of widespread use without generating any reports in the DAWN system.

National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS)

The NFLIS is a monitoring system of the Diversion Control Division of the DEA. It systematically collects and reports findings from drug chemistry analyses from law enforcement seizures (see <https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/nflis/>). The materials collected in seizures (e.g., during “drug busts” and drug dealer arrest operations) are analyzed by more than 300 state and local forensic laboratories nationwide. It thus provides a means of geographic tracking of what sorts of substances are being recovered, including diverted legally manufactured drugs, illicitly manufactured products (e.g., heroin and crack cocaine), and other substances and products.

Nearly two million analyses of drugs and other substances are tested annually. These include findings on opioids, depressants and tranquilizers, hallucinogens, anabolic steroids, and stimulants. These assessments thus provide statistically representative national and regional drug item estimates for the likelihood that a given substance will be found together with the most frequently identified drugs, and thereby some sense of

the mix of substances that have been collected in seizure operations. These reports are measures of seizures, not measures of actual use, abuse, adverse reactions, or overdose deaths.

Mitragynine was first reported in the NFLIS system in 2010. From 2013 to 2015, mitragynine reports accounted for approximately 0.01% of total reports. Specifically, 181 mitragynine reports were recorded in 2013 (out of 1,540,647 total reports), 137 in 2014 (out of 1,511,313 total reports), and 129 in 2015 (out of 1,549,466 total reports). The fact that these identifications were a new category, albeit at very low rates, led the DEA to place mitragynine on its “watch list,” meaning essentially that laboratories and investigators are encouraged to be alert for products potentially containing mitragynine and to be testing for mitragynine.

To provide some perspective of how mitragynine reports compare to opioids, Table 1 from the NFLIS July, 2015 special report on “Opiates and Related Drugs Reported in NFLIS, 2009-2014 (NFLIS, July, 2015)⁵ is shown below (See Table 3). Among these substances, heroin accounted for 699,847 (48.64%), followed by oxycodone at 285,381 (19.83%), and hydrocodone at 235,417 (16.36%), together accounting for approximately 85% of the 1,438,933 reports. Mitragynine reports totaled 42 (0.03%) in the second six months of 2011 and 88 (0.06%) in the first six months of 2014, and totaled 458 (0.03% overall) through June, 2014.

As confirmed by NFLIS, kratom is available to persons who have been found with substances of abuse, yet kratom has not emerged as a substance of abuse by any of the federal surveillance systems. This is not the profile of a substance with intrinsic activity indicative of a high risk of abuse, dependence, or addiction. It is more the profile of any number of substances including caffeinated products and over the counter medicines that are consumed and used by many people for the benefits that they provide, regardless of whether those individuals use, abuse, or distribute substances of abuse.

⁵ https://www.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/nflis/spec_rpt_opioids_2014.pdf.

Table 3. National Semiannual Estimates of Selected Opiate and Related Drug Reports in NFLIS, 2009-2014.

Selected Drug	2009				2010				2011			
	Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Heroin	53,584	45.94%	55,194	46.11%	57,969	42.94%	52,361	42.60%	56,892	43.57%	58,444	46.37%
Oxycodone	22,483	19.27%	24,058	20.10%	31,050	23.00%	29,681	24.15%	30,406	23.29%	26,769	21.24%
Hydrocodone	23,444	20.10%	23,027	19.24%	25,885	19.17%	22,631	18.41%	23,144	17.72%	21,398	16.98%
Buprenorphine	3,313	2.84%	3,911	3.27%	5,422	4.02%	5,107	4.15%	5,427	4.16%	4,831	3.83%
Methadone	4,925	4.22%	4,898	4.09%	5,007	3.71%	4,295	3.49%	4,460	3.42%	4,136	3.28%
Morphine	3,519	3.02%	3,631	3.03%	3,898	2.89%	3,548	2.89%	3,973	3.04%	4,017	3.19%
Codeine	2,194	1.88%	1,848	1.54%	2,110	1.56%	1,771	1.44%	2,007	1.54%	1,970	1.56%
Hydromorphone	1,157	0.99%	1,109	0.93%	1,332	0.99%	1,205	0.98%	1,503	1.15%	1,421	1.13%
Tramadol	635	0.54%	728	0.61%	887	0.66%	807	0.66%	842	0.64%	885	0.70%
Oxymorphone	189	0.16%	172	0.14%	359	0.27%	473	0.38%	1,176	0.90%	1,551	1.23%
Fentanyl	270	0.23%	314	0.26%	320	0.24%	320	0.26%	324	0.25%	300	0.24%
Propoxyphene	751	0.64%	698	0.58%	636	0.47%	641	0.52%	336	0.26%	203	0.16%
Meperidine	184	0.16%	100	0.08%	136	0.10%	74	0.06%	83	0.06%	83	0.07%
Mitragynine	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	42	0.03%
Acetyl fentanyl	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Sufentanil	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total ²	116,647	100.00%	119,689	100.00%	135,012	100.00%	122,915	100.00%	130,574	100.00%	126,049	100.00%

Selected Drug	2012				2013				2014		Total	
	Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Heroin	65,510	48.17%	65,453	49.83%	74,049	54.04%	75,430	56.31%	79,937	56.73%	694,822	48.58%
Oxycodone	27,053	19.89%	25,695	19.56%	23,854	17.41%	21,199	15.82%	21,507	15.26%	283,756	19.84%
Hydrocodone	21,901	16.10%	20,042	15.26%	18,834	13.75%	17,389	12.98%	16,951	12.03%	234,647	16.41%
Buprenorphine	5,614	4.13%	5,672	4.32%	5,635	4.11%	6,281	4.69%	7,261	5.15%	58,474	4.09%
Methadone	4,199	3.09%	3,657	2.78%	3,539	2.58%	3,014	2.25%	2,931	2.08%	45,062	3.15%
Morphine	4,467	3.28%	4,336	3.30%	4,123	3.01%	3,743	2.79%	3,976	2.82%	43,231	3.02%
Codeine	1,908	1.40%	1,729	1.32%	1,628	1.19%	1,715	1.28%	1,520	1.08%	20,400	1.43%
Hydromorphone	1,988	1.46%	2,273	1.73%	2,600	1.90%	2,383	1.78%	2,351	1.67%	19,321	1.35%
Tramadol	1,134	0.83%	977	0.74%	1,279	0.93%	1,135	0.85%	1,346	0.96%	10,653	0.74%
Oxymorphone	1,591	1.17%	889	0.68%	823	0.60%	904	0.67%	901	0.64%	9,029	0.63%
Fentanyl	316	0.23%	328	0.25%	380	0.28%	554	0.41%	1,989	1.41%	5,414	0.38%
Propoxyphene	198	0.15%	127	0.10%	105	0.08%	102	0.08%	77	0.05%	3,874	0.27%
Meperidine	76	0.06%	55	0.04%	63	0.05%	44	0.03%	41	0.03%	940	0.07%
Mitragynine	46	0.03%	110	0.08%	105	0.08%	68	0.05%	77	0.05%	448	0.03%
Acetyl fentanyl	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	6	0.00%	43	0.03%	49	0.00%
Sufentanil	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.00%
Total ²	136,002	100.00%	131,342	100.00%	137,015	100.00%	133,966	100.00%	140,909	100.00%	1,430,120	100.00%

¹ Includes drug reports submitted to laboratories from January 1, 2009, through June 30, 2014, that were analyzed within three months of the end of each six-month period.

² Numbers and percentages may not sum to totals because of rounding.

3.5 Factor 5: The scope, duration, and significance of abuse

As discussed in Factor 4 above, there appears to be little, if any, abuse of kratom in the US. To the extent to which benefits are provided by consumption of kratom-derived products, these appear possible with remarkably low risks of serious adverse effects as compared to opioids and there is little evidence or apparent risk that kratom products are used by routes other than oral beverage or food consumption, even though it is certainly theoretically possible to smoke, snort, or inject kratom extracts.

3.5.1 Internet monitoring

The dramatic growth of the Internet in the past 20 years has substantially changed the dissemination of ideas, contributed to trends in product use and misuse, and added new means of monitoring emerging substances. There are many websites that focus specifically on drug misuse and abuse, some intended to discourage such use as well as those that appear dedicated to providing information in support of, if not to encourage, misuse and abuse of drugs. An important limitation of the data is that they do not necessarily relate to incidence, prevalence, or to increases or decreases in population trends. For example, a single provocative posting might precipitate a series of postings (known as a “thread”) thereby creating a “bump” in the number of postings on a given topic which may not necessarily be related to population trends. Also, as is apparent by even a casual review of such websites, they including postings that can strain credulity. Thus, teams such as our group at PinneyAssociates led by Dr. Edward Cone, and the FDA’s Controlled Substances Staff, have learned to be careful in relying on such information for more than qualitative insights concerning the diversity of opinion and responses related to substances. Nonetheless, such insights, when compared against known pharmacology and epidemiology, can be useful in guiding policy including risk management efforts.

With the foregoing caveats in mind, and understanding that PinneyAssociates has not conducted an extensive evaluation of internet postings, the following provides representative examples of serious substance abusing persons who appear to have made efforts to compare kratom to their preferred substances.

Taken together, most of the postings involve what appear to be extremely high dosages of kratom substances and extracts, and self-made extracts from a variety of kratom sources: for example, users may combine several grams of kratom powder, several ounces of kratom leaves, and indeterminate forms of this or other substances. Some people have reported experiencing intoxication, euphoria, and other effects at these very high dosages, though typically, their comparisons to other drugs provide a basis for understanding why kratom and kratom products apparently are rarely the substance of choice among people who seek abused drugs and are in search of better ways to get better highs and euphoria. There are self-reports of dependence and withdrawal, but these tended to involve extremely high intakes of kratom, apparently along with other substances.

Table 4 provides what PinneyAssociates’ experience offers as a reasonable representation of kratom experiences.

Table 4. Verbatim accounts from Internet reports from a website that typically attracts people with histories of diverse substance use and abuse to describe their experiences

<http://www.bluelight.org/vb/threads/398307-Kratom-experiences>.

27-09-2008 03:28: Here's my personal opinion, others have had better experiences: Kratom offers a pleasing buzz, but it only lasts about an hour. Then it's gone and I can't redose for another 12 or so hours. It just won't work again if I try to dose sooner. When I use it every day, the buzz gets less and less until it's practically worthless. Kratom just didn't do me very well. I hope you have a better experience with it.

27-09-2008 04:28: Kratom is somewhat self limiting when it comes to abuse, or daily recreational use, yes. Each day you use it, it becomes a bit less warm and less euphoric. But its pain relieving properties continue after those effects fade. Even after continued daily use there will always be noticeable anxiety relieving, and pain relieving properties. You can avoid losing some of the glow and euphoria by switching to different strains every so often.

27-09-2008 08:15: After LOVING oxy to death and losing my source, I sought out some Kratom to act as a substitute. If you're expecting something amazing, you will definitely be disappointed. It DOES feel like an opiate, kind of, but it's very very limited. I tried several strains in several different dosages, and yeah, it doesn't have that much to offer. Doing too much is awful - I felt nauseous for DAYS. Doing too little is just boring. There IS somewhat of a sweet spot but it just doesn't scratch where I itch, compared to oxy (and I never did that much oxy that frequently, and I hadn't in weeks before kratom, and so it's not just an addiction thing).

28-09-2008 05:49: Personally I like the taste of pod tea, the stronger the better. It's preferable to the odd taste of kratom (even though I will drink kratom tea straight as well). But Kratom has a numbing sensation on my mouth when I drink it, like pins and needles on the tongue. I've never really felt too much from kratom. I've had the so-called 10x extracts and the leaves, with the extracts I'd just down them with a lot of water, and with the leaves just make some tea. I'd say that the effects were a bit stronger from the leaves, however. I had to use about 1/4 an ounce, which (if I remember correctly) was a few cups of tea...a french press would probably be even more effective, though. Subjectively the effects felt similar to a moderate dose of tramadol...especially the serotonergic wakefulness type of feeling. It was great for staving off withdrawals, but I couldn't see it being my drug of choice. After a certain point taking more kratom doesn't seem to increase or prolong the euphoria much. I'm willing to bet though that people who have never been addicted to opiates would enjoy this drug much more than those who are or have been.

28-09-2008 06:00: "Yes the taste of Kratom tea is disgusting. That's why tea is no longer the preferred method of ingestion by Kratom users. We use TNW= puddle on tongue, plop kratom in, swallow, follow with water. You won't feel too much from kratom. It's very subtle for most. The extracts are usually unbalanced and stimulative, rather than relaxing and euphoric. You took far too many leaves. I did the same thing when I first tried Kratom. You only need 2-3 tea spoons. Taking too much will make you sick, or could even ruin the effects all together. I guess you can't really take it and then just forget you took it. You need to recognize the effects and focus on them to feel nice. And

yes, Re-dosing Kratom is useless, you will feel nothing more. It may make the aroma last longer, but it wont increase the potency of the smell."

Similarly, Swogger et al. (2015) conducted a qualitative analysis of first-hand descriptions of human kratom consumption that were submitted to, and published by, a psychoactive substance information website (Erowid.org) as "experience reports." For such participation in the Erowid system people are asked to self-administer the substance, often at high dosage levels, and then report their effects over the next 8 hours. A caveat, based on the experience of the authors of this report, is that Erowid site participants would seem more likely than people in the general population to be heavy users and poly drug users and abusers, including many in this survey with self-reported use and dependence to prototypic opioids, cocaine, and other drugs.

Four general themes emerged as associated with kratom product consumption (see Swogger et al., 2015 for greater detail):

1. Positive experiences was the most prominent theme with euphoria occurring in 30.4% of the respondents especially at high dosages, relaxation in 23.6%, and increased energy in 8.7%.
2. Negative experiences including nausea, stomachache, and cramping occurred in 16.1%. This included alternating chills and sweats in 9.3%, dizziness and unsteadiness in 6.8%, and vomiting in 3.1%.
3. Neutral experiences occurred in about 10% of the respondents, which included numbness of the throat and mouth, visual alterations, and sedation.
4. Substitution occurred in 10.6%, meaning that 10.6% used kratom as a substitute for an unwanted substance. This included 9.9% who used kratom to relieve symptoms of withdrawal from another substance.

Themes that emerged from these experience reports indicate that kratom may be useful for analgesia, mood elevation, and anxiety reduction, and may aid opioid withdrawal management. Negative response themes also emerged, indicating potential problems and unfavorable "side" effects, especially stomach upset and vomiting.

A number (10.6%) of individuals reported successfully using kratom as a substitute to help abstain from the use of other substances perceived as addictive and/or causing harm. These substances were primarily opioids, such as oxycodone and heroin, but also included benzodiazepines and antidepressants. In addition to substitution, 9.9% of the sample reported withdrawal symptoms after using kratom. The consumers generally perceived their withdrawal symptoms to be milder than, but similar to, those

caused by withdrawal from opiates. Only five percent of the sample reported tolerance to kratom, including a willingness to take higher doses in order to achieve the same effect. Finally, 4.3% of experience reports referenced hangover-like symptoms such as headache and nausea on the day after ingestion of kratom.

3.5.2 Dr. Oliver Grundmann Preliminary Report on Kratom Use and the Health Impact of Kratom Consumption – An online anonymous survey

Concluding our analysis of CSA Factor 5 is a summary of a few of the particularly relevant findings from the most comprehensive, relevant, and well-designed systematic internet survey of kratom users that has been done. It includes information from more than 9550 kratom users collected in October of 2016. The survey was designed “to provide [data for] stakeholders involved in kratom regulation, consumption, and current availability to better understand the current users statistics and the impact of kratom on health and specific conditions” in the US.

This survey was conducted by Oliver Grundmann, PhD, Department of Medicinal Chemistry, College of Pharmacy, University of Florida. Dr. Grundmann is Clinical Associate Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, and co-author of the Warner et al. review relied on in this 8 Factor Analysis. The study was conducted with the approval of the University of Florida Institutional Review Board. These findings have been extracted from a preliminary analysis of the report that is in preparation for publication by Dr. Grundmann, and the following summary was approved by Dr. Grundmann for inclusion in this 8 Factor Analysis. It is the opinion of the authors of this analysis that these findings and many other findings in the Grundmann study are highly relevant to consideration of the appropriateness of kratom for CSA scheduling, and that the findings would also be invaluable to FDA in its potential consideration of kratom’s profile of consumption, effects, and health impact in the community. We encourage FDA, NIDA, and DEA to consult with Dr. Grundmann for a more extensive presentation of these findings if actions are considered prior to their publication.

Dr. Grundmann describes the general nature and intent of the study as follows: *“It is intended to provide stakeholders involved in Kratom regulation, consumption, and current availability to better understand the current user statistics and the impact of Kratom on health and specific conditions. It is not meant to be comprehensive or necessarily reflect the breadth of specific beneficial and adverse effects of Kratom. Rather, it serves as a basis for further research and to provide all stakeholders with a current snapshot of Kratom use in the US.”*

Total # of respondents who consented to participate: 9,550

Age range: 54.17% were between the ages of 31-50, 29% younger than 30

Gender: 42.75% of respondents were female

Marital status: 1/3 were single/never married, 53.37% are married or partnered

Race: predominantly (89%) white

Employment: 57% employed for wages, 15% self-employed, 6% homemakers, 3.5% retired

Insurance coverage: 47% insurance through employer, 14% insurance through self-employment, 14.4% no insurance, 15.5% Medicare or Medicaid

Education: 82% at least some college (AA) or higher

Household income: 15% 35K-49K, 18.8% 50K-74K, 28.2% 75K and higher

The following findings are considered by Henningfield and Fant, and other PinneyAssociates experts to be particularly important in helping FDA in its evaluation of kratom given the size, scope, and design of the study and the fact that these variables are highly relevant to understanding reasons for consumption, consequences of consumption, and the consequences of a regulatory action that would prevent such individuals from obtaining kratom products. The Grundmann survey provides additional and complimentary information to the American Kratom Association's collection of testimonials from Kratom users (Attachment A), and would seem to provide an important quantitative basis for understanding the representativeness of those testimonials and for projecting to the broader population of perhaps 2 million or more American kratom users.

About 84% of the respondents self-reported good to very good health.

About 98% reported "currently" using kratom-containing products.

About 61% reported consumption in the form of powdered kratom consumed with a beverage or self-prepared kratom tea.

Less than 1% used store-bought liquid kratom (shot).

About 21% experienced some negative effects and these were predominantly nausea, constipation and other GI related.

Less than 1% reported needing health care treatment "because of your kratom use."

About 98% reported that a ban on kratom would negatively affect them.

Whereas most would support "regulating the quality of kratom products on the US market" about 90% answered "no" to the question: "Would you support categorizing Kratom as a medication that requires consultation with a pharmacist before purchase?"

Taken together, these and other findings reported by Grundmann provide a recent and informative characterization of kratom use and effects in the community, with the vast majority of the nearly 10,000 respondents reporting consumption for varied benefits,

intake likely limited by undesired but apparently mild and tolerable GI and other effects, and little evidence of effects of medical or public health concern. The reports support the conclusion that removal of kratom from the market would be viewed highly negatively and the demand would likely drive many to illicit sources of kratom.

3.5.3 Testimonials Regarding Benefits

Consistent with the survey cited above, Attachment A provides a number of testimonials from kratom users regarding the perceived benefits of kratom.

The testimonials provide qualitative and personal insights that complement the quantitative and qualitative survey of Dr. Grundmann. The profile that emerges is that kratom is consumed primarily for general and specific life and life-style enhancing reasons. For many, the reasons include its value as a natural remedy for ailments. These consumers believe that kratom is more satisfactory than conventional medicines with respect to apparent effectiveness and has fewer undesirable side-effects than conventional medicines. Interestingly, this is not because kratom is devoid of any side effects. Indeed, many consumers report apparently readily tolerable gastrointestinal effects including some “stomach upset,” mild nausea, and constipation that apparently function to limit intake but are acceptable and tolerated in a natural therapy. From the perspective of abuse potential, to the extent to which such effects serve to mitigate the dose escalation that is so prominent with many known substances of abuse, including opioids, this is a highly favorable profile that may be part of the reason that abuse and abuse potential in the community appears very low.

3.6 Factor 6: What, if any, risk there is to the public health

As mentioned earlier, kratom products have been widely marketed and consumed as dietary supplements and natural remedies since at least the early 2000s. In collaboration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the FDA “estimated the number of emergency department visits for adverse events associated with dietary supplements in the United States using 10 years of data (from January 1, 2004, through December 3, 2013) from the 63 hospitals participating in the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-Cooperative Adverse Drug Event Surveillance (NEISS-CADES) project conducted by the CDC, the FDA, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission” (Geller et al., 2015). Projecting from 3667 cases, they estimated an average of 23,005 such emergency department visits annually, with 2154 hospitalizations annually. One fifth of the supplement-related visits involved unsupervised ingestion by children. The vast majority of the emergency visits involved products used for weight loss, energy, and sexual enhancement involving substance such as kava, hydroxytryptophan, caffeine, ephedra, ginseng, and yohimbine root. Less than 2% involved products used for pain or arthritis relief and these included substances such as arnica, glucosamine, and pokeweed. None were reported to have involved kratom or mitragynines. This does not mean that there actually had been none

involving kratom or mitragynines, but certainly the public health signal through this major reporting system was very small and not indicative of a major public health problem.

In a recent review of the toxicology of mitragynine and analogs, Ramanathan and Mansor (2015, p. 282) concluded as follows: “To date there have been no reports of fatal overdose of kratom *per se*. If there are such occurrences, they are probably the result of kratom products contaminated with synthetic adulterants.” This is consistent with other reviews of kratom pharmacology, toxicology, and epidemiology (Warner et al. 2016). In fact, if kratom products were banned from the market, it appears likely that many users would turn to the illicit market that would immediately expand to meet the demand. In that marketplace, there would be no oversight by FDA and no basis for consumers to be assured of product purity and contents. Moreover, the illicit market is also a competitive marketplace. It is reasonable to assume that many illicit product manufacturers and distributors would be likely to spike their products with various other substances in order to support their claims such as “Special Product X” (possibly with added synthetic cannabinoids to provide claimed increased mood altering effects); “Special Product Relief” (possibly with added synthetic opioids to increase pain relief); “Special Product S” (possibly with added synthetic stimulants to increase the stimulant effects) and so on. Replacement of the licit market (and a licit market that would hopefully thrive with increased FDA oversight) with the illicit market would invariably precipitate public health problems, serious adverse events, and associated overdose deaths that would pose far greater risks to the public health.

Despite the availability of more concentrated kratom based solutions, the production of some swallowable products, and some smoking in Southeast Asia, consumption of oral liquids and leaf chewing appears to vastly predominate. In fact, use by injection of extracted and concentrated alkaloids and nasal insufflation are not reported in Southeast Asia despite the fact that such routes (as well as smoking) are common in the same regions for opioids. This is another similarity with caffeine, which theoretically could be concentrated and injected, as has been done in human research (Garrett and Griffiths, 2001), yet globally the oral liquid consumption overwhelmingly predominates. Efforts to intensify the effects of kratom products by the approaches typical of opioids and stimulants, namely by injecting and snorting, have not been reported. Although there have been some reports of leaf smoking in Southeast Asia, this does not appear to be a common practice and consumption by smoking has not been reported in the US. This is consistent with the relatively low apparent intrinsic attractiveness of the alkaloids to persons who abuse drugs and are typically seeking strong stimulation, intoxication, sedation, and/or euphoria as can be produced by prototypical drugs of abuse such as amphetamine and cocaine types of stimulants, alcohol and controlled sedatives, and scheduled opioids, but are not found with kratom.

3.6.1 American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System (AAPCC-NPDS)

The AAPCC-NPDS is considered a timely and sensitive system for tracking the emergence of trends in use-related effects and for capturing relatively low frequency events. From 2000 to 2005, a total of two (2) kratom-related exposures were reported to AAPCC; however, from 2010 to 2015, a total of 660 kratom-related calls were received (increasing from 26 in 2010 to 263 in 2015).⁶ Kratom has not yet reached the threshold for inclusion as a separate product in annual AAPCC reports. The most recent report currently available is 2014. While the number of kratom calls for 2014 is not known, a reasonable proxy would be the 263 known kratom-related calls from 2015. In comparison, there were 55,151 diphenhydramine⁷-related calls, 18,470 aspirin⁸-related calls, and 1,355 nicotine pharmaceutical-related calls in 2014 (e.g., nicotine gum, patch, and lozenge).

3.6.2 Pediatric/Child (less than 6 years of age) exposure related adverse events and deaths.

An important consideration in public health and safety is the risks to children. Simply stated, we have been unable to document any deaths related to kratom exposure in children, or even evidence of serious adverse events or emergency department admissions for children attributed to kratom product exposure. This has included a review of federal surveillance systems including the AAPCC-NPDS described above, and internet searches for local and national media that typically report such events as news stories. This does not mean that no such events have occurred, but it does suggest that the signal is very weak and that any exposures that have occurred have not been associated with severe consequences. The rates of exposures and adverse events in children, which are apparently below the threshold of detection, are particularly striking in that they do not reflect a dearth of marketed and sold products. To the contrary, kratom products are sold by an estimated 10,000 vendors, and purchased, prepared, and used by millions of Americans in a wide variety of products constituting an approximately 200 million dollar market. Furthermore, to date there has been minimal guidance from FDA concerning packaging, allowable alkaloid content of manufactured products, labeling, and other guidance to minimize risks and promote safe storage and disposal. This is not an argument against such FDA oversight. To the

⁶ <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6529a4.htm>.

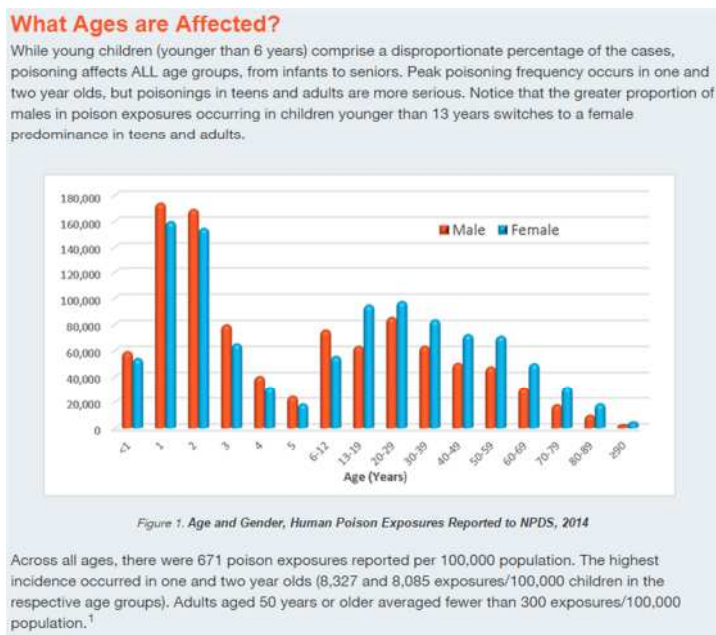
⁷ Diphenhydramine alone or in combination

⁸ Aspirin only; does not include combination products

contrary, appropriate guidance and regulation would be expected to help sustain low rates of inappropriate exposures and to minimize unintended consequences in children and adults. Nonetheless, the absence of adverse events in children and low prevalence of serious adverse events in adults is testament to the apparently intrinsic low hazard potential of kratom as marketed and used in the US.

The following figures are from the National Capital Poison Center (2016). These are provided to illustrate the importance of considering children under age 6 as a crucial population in evaluating the safety of opioids, and to provide in this report a context for the evaluation of the health impact and safety of kratom.

This figure does not reflect or include any kratom-related poisonings since none had been reported by publication of these data.



Most Common Substances Implicated in Poison Exposures?

Cosmetics and personal care products lead the list of the most common substances implicated in pediatric exposures (children younger than 6 years, NPDS, 2014). Cleaning substances and pain medications follow. These exposures are nearly always unintentional.

	No.	%
Cosmetics & Personal Care Products	150,530	14.0
Cleaning Substances	118,207	11.0
Analgesics	100,399	9.3
Foreign Bodies/Toys/Miscellaneous	72,099	6.7
Topical Preparations	62,053	5.8
Vitamins	48,214	4.5
Antihistamines	45,915	4.3
Pesticides	35,152	3.3
GI preparations	28,460	2.7
Plants	27,941	2.6

Pain medications are the single most frequent cause of pediatric fatalities reported to Poison Control. That's a skewed picture, because carbon monoxide deaths are under-reported. The table below shows poisoning fatalities in children younger than 6 years reported to US Poison Control from 2010 through 2014.

	No.	%
Analgesics	133	19.2
Fumes/Gases/Vapors	86	12.4
Cold and Cough Preparations	49	7.1
Antihistamines	38	5.5
Hydrocarbons	29	4.2
Sedative/Hypnotics/Antipsychotic	29	4.2
Cleaning Substances (Household)	28	4.0
Antidepressants	26	3.8
Cardiovascular Drugs	23	3.3
Alcohols	19	2.7
Stimulants and Street Drugs	18	2.6
Batteries	17	2.5
Pesticides	17	2.5

The substance categories with the largest number of deaths across all ages (and including intentional exposures) include acetaminophen-containing medications, sedatives and sleeping medications, cardiovascular drugs, opioids, stimulants and street drugs, and alcohols (NPDS, 2014).

As summarized above, many types of products are routinely reported as child exposures to poison control centers. Kratom-related poisonings had not been reported to the NPDS at the time of publication of these data. The foregoing does not guarantee that exposure and adverse events will not occur in the future, even if they have not yet occurred. Despite efforts to minimize the risks and consequences of such exposures, across the nation, many children do and likely will continue to be able to ingest all nature of household and industrial products including cleaning products, agricultural products, glues, solvents, plants, chemicals, drugs, tobacco, nicotine liquids, and other potentially harmful substances. Minimizing such risks is a benefit of product regulation that ensures child resistant packaging as appropriate to the product, education, and

labeling to ensure safe use, handling, and storage. Kratom products will presumably be evaluated by FDA to ensure appropriate packaging, labeling, and education; in that way, FDA can be confident that current and future kratom products pose minimal risks to children.

The following three plausible factors contribute to the apparent very low risk that kratom products pose to children, as well as to adults:

1. Low toxicity and harm potential of kratom and its alkaloids
2. Poor taste of even commercially marketed products with a commonly described “yuck” factor that would be expected to discourage consumption by children
3. Relatively low concentrations of alkaloids apparent in most marketed products and in raw leaf material

3.6.3 Ex-US Safety/Toxicity Data

Kratom consumption is quite high in Southeast Asia, with likely over 1 million regular adult users in Thailand alone. Heavy use by laborers, plentiful and inexpensive supplies of raw material, and hundreds of years of history of use have provided both experience in consumption as well as countless millions of exposures and opportunities for overdose deaths and other serious adverse health consequences if there were a high risk of such. Yet fewer than 100 serious adverse events associated with kratom consumption have been reported from Southeast Asia. A limitation of safety data from Southeast Asia is that much kratom consumption likely occurs in rural areas with limited reporting systems. Nonetheless, in contrast to opioid abuse and dependence, kratom consumption is not considered a major public health problem.

In an exploratory ethnographic survey of 149 long-term regular users of kratom (who chewed the leaves) in Thailand, the percentage of users reporting the negative effects of using kratom was relatively low (4–14% of all users) (Assanangkornchai et al., 2007). The negative effects included a perception of less productivity, a decreased sexual drive, fatigue, poor health, wasteful spending habits, dizziness, poor concentration and distractedness, difficulty sleeping, wasting working time, irritability, poor thinking ability, impaired memory, laziness, and social withdrawal. The perceived benefits of kratom consumption included helping users work longer and harder, feeling happy/sprightly, maintaining a good mood, sleeping soundly, and being healthy. In Thailand, the benefits of consumption, as reported by users and nonusers alike, appear to predominate over the negative effects, although these conclusions come from research that is more ethnographic characterization than clinical trial type research.

The safety of low doses of MG has also been evaluated in animal toxicology studies. Hassan and colleagues (2013) reviewed the data on the toxicology of MG as follows: In animal models, the toxicity of MG was claimed to be relatively low. Macko and

colleagues (1972) found no evidence of toxicity, measured as tremors or convulsions, at doses as high as 920 mg/kg in dogs. A more recent study in rats reported lethal effects of 200 mg/kg total alkaloid extract of *M. speciosa* given intragastrically (Azizi et al., 2010). The actual amounts of MG as compared to other alkaloids were not reported by Azizi, and the specific relevance to human safety is limited, because humans consume far less than 200 mg/kg. Janchawee and colleagues (2007) reported lethal effects after an oral dose of 200 mg MG in rats.

Sabetghadam and colleagues (2013) administered three doses of MG (1, 10, 100mg/kg, p.o.) to rats for 28 days respectively. The groups of rats treated with the lower and intermediate doses showed no toxic effects during the study. Only relative liver weight increased after treatment with the high dose of MG (100mg/kg) in both the male and female treatment groups of rats. Biochemical and hematological parameters were also altered, especially in the high dose treatment group, which corresponds to the histopathological changes. Another study, also mentioned below in a summary of addiction potential studies is relevant to safety although it was designed to assess physical dependence and withdrawal at very high dosage relative to typical human consumption (Yusoff et al., 2016). Laboratory rats were given 30 mg/kg/day i.p., equating to an oral dose of about 990 mg/kg – equivalent to over 800 human 2-ounce doses. Some evidence of dependence and withdrawal were demonstrated but not lethality.

3.6.4 Deaths Possibly Involving Kratom

To date, there have been no reports of fatal overdose from kratom *per se* (Raffa, 2015, and references cited therein). Although there has been little systematic study of the pharmacodynamic effects of kratom, there is little clinical or scientific evidence of respiratory depression, and this would be consistent with the absence of documented overdose deaths attributable to kratom. Fourteen deaths potentially related to kratom had been reported globally until the DEA August posting in the Federal Register (see below). Of these, nine occurred in Sweden and appeared to have been related to consumption of an herbal blend called Krypton that was adulterated with O-desmethyiltramadol, an active metabolite of the analgesic drug tramadol, which has been documented to carry a risk of severe respiratory depression and overdose death (Backstrom et al., 2010). The other five, three in the US, one in Norway, and one in Thailand, included co-administration of other drug substances. As a result, the actual cause of death is not clear.

In its analysis, DEA reported the following regarding deaths related to kratom in its Factor 6 analysis:

Deaths related to kratom exposure have been reported in the scientific literature beginning in 2009-2010, with a cluster of nine deaths in Sweden from use of the kratom product “Krypton” (Kronstrand et al, 2011). Since then, five more deaths related to kratom exposure were reported in the scientific literature (Holler et al., 2011, Neerman et al., 2013, Karinen et al., 2014, McIntyre, 2015, Anwar et al.,

2016), and at least 16 additional deaths connected to kratom exposure, have been confirmed by autopsy/medical examiner reports (mitragynine and/or 7-hydroxymitragynine were identified in biological samples). Of these deaths, 15 occurred between 2014 and 2016 (citing Autopsy/Medical Examiner (ME) reports on file with DEA).

DEA has not made available information that would enable assessment of the basis for concluding that kratom was “connected” to the “16 additional deaths” (beyond the 14 discussed above and elsewhere (Henningfield, 2015; Warner et al., 2016)). As demonstrated by the referenced sources in the DEA document, there has never been a published report in the literature of a death solely attributable to kratom, but rather these reported cases involved the ingestion of kratom along with pharmaceuticals or controlled substances known to present risk of death. These reports as summarized by the FDA document seem to agree with the general finding that these deaths were not solely attributable to kratom and generally leave the potential role of kratom unclear. For example, in the case of the nine deaths in Sweden occurring late 2009 to early 2010, the product ingested was not pure kratom, but rather a product called “Krypton.” Laboratory analyses identified mitragynine and O-desmethyltramadol (known substances in Krypton blend) and other substances in blood samples of the deceased (Kronstrand et al., 2011). Several other cases of deaths involving multiple drugs are described in the DEA review as described in the table below. The contributing role of kratom, if any, cannot be ascertained, and interpreting these as “kratom-caused” or “Kratom overdoses” is certainly beyond the evidence.

Source	Drugs Involved
Neerman et al. (2013)	Mitragynine and therapeutic levels of dextromethorphan, temazepam, 7-amino-clonazepam, and a slightly elevated level of diphenhydramine in blood samples
Karinen et al. (2014)	Mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine, zipiclone, citalopram, and lamotrigine in blood samples
McIntyre et al. (2015)	Mitragynine, along with therapeutic levels of venlafaxine, diphenhydramine, mirtazapine, and ethanol
Medical Examiner for Palm Beach, Florida (2014)	Mitragynine along with venlafaxine, fentanyl, amphetamine, and caffeine
Medical Examiner for Dekalb County, GA (2015)	Mitragynine, along with fentanyl, benzodiazepines, and cannabinoids
Medical Examiner for San Diego, CA (2015)	Mitragynine, along with methadone and alprazolam
Medical Examiner for San Diego, CA (2015)	Mitragynine, fentanyl, alprazolam, and an active clonazepam metabolite
Medical Examiner for San Diego, CA (2015)	Mitragynine, along with alcohol, benzodiazepines, and opiates

There was also a case of suicide in 2016, in which a 56-year old man was found with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. The decedent had a history of alcohol and drug abuse. Laboratory analyses identified mitragynine and caffeine in blood samples. The cause of death, as determined by the Medical Examiner, was gunshot wound to the head. It is doubtful that consumption of kratom was in any way related to this death.

There were, however, three cases reported in the DEA analysis (DEA, 2016) in which kratom appeared to contribute to the death, though the mechanisms are not clear and the nature of the deaths seemed widely varied, possibly reflecting chronic heavy consumption of kratom and possibly other substances, as opposed to overdose death caused by opioid respiratory depression. One was a case of severe hypoxic encephalopathy complicating apparent mitragynine toxicity. The second case was determined by the Medical Examiner to be acute mitragynine (kratom) intoxication. The amount of mitragynine found in the liver was 200 times more than reported by McIntyre et al. (2015), where mitragynine intoxication was concluded to be the primary cause of death. In the third case, kratom products ("Green Malaysian", "Yellow Vein Maeng Da", and "Red Borneo"), and vials labeled U-47700 were found at the scene of the death. Laboratory analyses of blood samples identified the presence of mitragynine and the opioid antagonist naloxone. The cause of death, as determined by the Medical Examiner, was probable polypharmacy overdose.

A recently published, peer-reviewed article outlines well the position of the published studies: "Although death has been attributed to kratom consumption, there is no solid evidence that kratom was the sole contributor to an individual's death" (Warner et al., 2016). We do not rule out the possibility that there have been overdose deaths involving extremely high doses of kratom; however, to date, we have been unable to document a single death in which kratom overdose can reasonably be concluded to have been "causal" in the death. By any measure this is in stark contrast with what has been documented for most recognized drugs and substances of abuse. For example, CDC reported data for 2014, with limitations acknowledged, in which deaths were reasonably concluded to have been categorized substantially, if not exclusively, to an opioid (28,647 in 2014 or nearly 80 per day) or other drugs most notably including sedatives, alcohol, and stimulants (18,408 or about 50 per day) for a total of 47,055 or about 129 per day (Rudd et al., 2016).

As mentioned earlier the very low risk of overdose poisoning and serious adverse events does not mean that they have not and will not occur. However, given the two decades during which consumption has increased to an estimated two or more million consumers in the US, in addition to far more extensive consumption in Southeast Asia, this is a substance and category of product with a remarkable safety record. It is not the profile of a serious or emerging public health problem that warrants drastic actions that would prohibit kratom consumers from continuing to lawfully purchase kratom. The safety record is all the more impressive given that kratom products have been marketed, prepared, and consumed without the level of regulatory oversight that is

present for many other dietary supplements and natural products under the FDCA. Balanced and appropriate regulation seems vital to maintain the safety record. This should be accompanied by increased surveillance to better guide kratom regulation going into the future.

3.7 Factor 7: Its psychic or physiological dependence liability

There have not been adequate studies of physical or psychological dependence or abuse potential in humans caused by kratom. MG in high doses has been shown to produce physical dependence in rats. Yusoff et al. (2016) tested rats that received MG (30 mg/kg; i.p.) for 14 days and observed increased locomotor activity after withdrawal. MG induced a sensitized locomotor activation, which was significant after 7 and 14 days of treatment. There were no effects on locomotor activity during the subsequent three days of withdrawal. On measures of anxiety during withdrawal, the authors found no effects on anxiety after 12 hours of abstinence. However, after 24 hours and 48 hours, there was a significant decline in open arm time suggesting withdrawal-induced anxiety. MG withdrawal induced a paw tremor, body tremor, wet-dog shakes, ptosis, piloerection, teeth chattering, and grooming 12 hours after withdrawal. Except paw tremor and grooming, all effects were still present 48 hours after withdrawal. Most of the effects disappeared after 72 hours. The 30 mg/kg injected dose in this study would equate to an oral dose of 990 mg/kg. Converting this to a human equivalent dose based on body surface area, this would equate to approximately 160 mg/kg in humans, or over 11 grams of MG taken orally by a 70 kg human. The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp, et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). Based on this, 1 gram of kratom leaves would contain around 15 mg of alkaloids (based on the 1.5% figure), about 9 mg of which would be MG. This would suggest that a human would need to consume over 1,200 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a reinforcing effect – equivalent to over 1,000 2-ounce doses. Although kratom leaves also contain smaller quantities of other alkaloids including 7-OH-MG, which is more potent at the mu opioid receptor, very large quantities of kratom would have to be consumed to even see the levels of withdrawal seen in rats in this study.

Suwanlert (1975) reported that the chronic exposure to *M. speciosa* preparations can be followed by withdrawal symptoms in humans. Typical withdrawal symptoms include hostility, aggression, excessive tearing, inability to work, aching of muscle or bones, and jerky limb movements. Anxiety, restlessness, tremor, sweating, and craving for *M. speciosa* were some of the withdrawal symptoms caused by *M. speciosa* dependence in an elderly man with an additional history of alcohol and anxiety disorder (McWhirter and Morris, 2010). Given mitragynine affinity to μ -opioid receptors, it is tempting to speculate that dependence and withdrawal syndromes may be mediated via this pathway. Although descriptive reports suggest that *M. speciosa* users might become addicted (Suwanlert, 1975), scientific reports on the rewarding properties of the plant or its active compounds are scarce at present.

Clearly there is a need for more clinical and nonclinical research on the behavioral and physiologic effects and abuse/dependence liability of kratom. It is not completely devoid of signs that could be consistent with abuse or dependence, but neither is there evidence of high abuse/dependence potential that would support the conclusion that CSA scheduling is indicated.

3.8 Factor 8: Whether the substance is an immediate precursor of a substance already controlled under this subchapter

Neither kratom nor any of the constituents in kratom or its alkaloids are controlled substances or are precursors of a controlled substance.

4 Recommendation

After consideration of the eight factors indicative of control in the CSA, a substance must be found to meet three findings “required” for placing the substance in a particular schedule. 21 USC 812(b). These findings relate to the substance’s abuse potential, its physical or psychological dependence liability, and its accepted medical use in the United States.

4.1 Kratom’s potential for abuse is consistent with unscheduled substances

In evaluating the potential for abuse of kratom and its alkaloids, the history of consumption in Southeast Asia spanning centuries in addition to the decades of use in the U.S. reveals a pattern of volitional use with very little evidence of actual abuse. The history of use is consistent with the pharmacology of kratom and more specifically its alkaloids (MG and 7-OH MG), which produce mixed pharmacological effects that are generally mild and consistent with the stimulant-like effect of caffeine. The combination of pharmacology and pattern of actual use demonstrate that kratom’s abuse potential is consistent with that of other unscheduled substances.

Mitragynine is an indole-containing alkaloid that is structurally similar to yohimbine, the primary component of yohimbe extract, which is legally marketed in the United States as a dietary supplement. Although the pharmacology of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG are still being studied, the most recent analysis gives significant reason to think that the pharmacology would predict low potential for abuse. In particular, analysis by Kruegel et al. (2016) shows that mitragynine is only a partial agonist of the human μ -opioid receptor, and in fact acts as an antagonist to the δ - and κ -opioid receptors. Kratom’s only partial agonist activity, specificity to the human μ -opioid receptor, antagonist activity to the δ - and κ -opioid receptors, and mechanism of action are all consistent with other partial agonists that “display less respiratory depression, tolerance development, and constipation” (Kruegel et al., 2016). Indeed, an absence of reports of respiratory depression or dose escalation characterizes the observed use patterns of kratom, as

detailed below. Although 7-OH-MG appears to have some stronger agonist characteristics, it is less than 2% of the crude base and “is unlikely to generally account for the psychoactive properties of this plant” (*Id.*). Nor could either MG or 7-OH-MG be extracted from kratom without sophisticated equipment and chemistry training. As a result, the pharmacology predicts a potential for abuse on par with other unscheduled substances.

The observed patterns of use in the United States confirm the prediction of the pharmacology: kratom’s use patterns in the United States reflect volitional use for desired effects and are inconsistent with abuse. In assessing kratom’s potential for abuse, the history of use stretching back decades in the United States, and centuries in Southeast Asia, provide ample data to establish the patterns of use of the product. That history is notable for the absence of many indicia of abuse, such as impaired control over use, compulsive use, and continued use despite harm. Federal surveys on drug abuse have not detected a significant signal regarding abuse of kratom. This reflects not only a dearth of abusive use, but also a lack of individuals seeking treatment or therapy for addiction. Reports of poisonings and deaths remain very rare and are complicated by comorbidities and exposure to other substances; remarkably, no deaths, serious adverse effects, or emergency department exposures have been reported in children. Accordingly, the patterns of use do not reflect significant actual or potential for abuse.

In contrast, kratom consumers describe mild effects characterized by alertness and mood enhancement, comparable to the effects of coffee and other caffeine containing beverages and dietary supplements. Consumers also sometimes report increased sociability, again comparable to that experienced with caffeinated beverages. Kratom consumers have not been observed to engage in intravenous, intranasal, or inhalation abuse of the substance,⁹ nor have there been significant reports of binging. Instead, kratom consumers commonly consume kratom as a tea or else sprinkle the substance on foods. The actual patterns of use and effects are comparable to those of other unscheduled substances, including coffee, tea, and other dietary supplements.

The assessment of a substance’s potential for abuse is an inherently comparative assessment and requires consideration in the context of other comparable substances.

⁹ FDA has previously concluded a substance has a lower potential for abuse when it is only consumed orally and is not abused by “other routes of administration, either intravenously, intranasally, or by inhalation of the smoked drug substance.” FDA, *Basis for the Recommendation to Reschedule Nabilone from Schedule II to III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA)* at 10 (Sept. 11, 1998). FDA recommended rescheduling Nabilone to schedule III, despite finding “an adverse reaction profile similar to delta⁹-THC” and “delayed onset and longer duration of action of marijuana.”

In this regard, kratom's potential for abuse is equivalent to, or lower than, that of a variety of unscheduled substances. For example, the FDA-approved drug Contrave® contains the substance bupropion, which has been shown to have properties consistent with "feelings of euphoria and drug desirability" (Contrave Prescribing Information (PI) at § 9.2). In a section labeled "Abuse," the FDA-approved PI for Contrave states that bupropion caused agitation/excitement, "produced mild amphetamine-like activity," and scored between placebo and amphetamine on a liking scale (*Id.*). Nevertheless, FDA did not recommend scheduling bupropion – as the substance's mild characteristics of abuse potential can be sufficiently managed through regulation under the FDCA.

Likewise, FDA declined to recommend scheduling of dextromethorphan, despite multiple characteristics of a drug of abuse that appear to far exceed kratom's potential for abuse. Dextromethorphan is a substance chemically related to the opioid codeine and is used as an ingredient in many cough suppressants available as over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. In that way, dextromethorphan, like kratom, is readily available for consumer purchase. DEA has determined that dextromethorphan is associated with "[e]uphoria and hallucinations" and significant intoxicating effects, including "hyperexcitability, lethargy, ataxia, slurred speech, sweating, hypertension, and/or nystagmus" (DEA Office of Diversion Control, *Dextromethorphan*, Mar. 2014).¹⁰ According to the 2014 DEA factsheet, dextromethorphan has been the subject of 45,748 Poison Control Center case mentions, 33,811 single exposures, and six deaths. *Id.* Likewise, analysis by FDA found that although the drug was not "widely abused," it demonstrated a propensity for abuse and "intentional misuse for abusive purposes." See Briefing Package for FDA Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee, Sept. 14, 2010.¹¹ Yet the recommendation of the Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee against scheduling,¹² and its continued absence from CSA scheduling, appears to reflect the understanding that the drug may be appropriately managed through FDCA regulation.

¹⁰ The DEA factsheet is available at https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_chem_info/dextro_m.pdf.

¹¹ The package is available at <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/Drugs/DrugSafetyandRiskManagementAdvisoryCommittee/UCM224446.pdf>.

¹² See, e.g., Kerri Wachter, *FDA Panel Recommends That Dextromethorphan Not Be a Scheduled Drug*, Internal Medicine News (Sept. 14, 2010), available at <http://www.mdedge.com/internalmedicineneeds/article/17801/adolescent-medicine/fda-panel-recommends-dextromethorphan-not-be>.

Nicotine is another example of a broadly marketed and used substance that meets criteria for CSA scheduling, and was determined by FDA to merit potential appropriate placement in Schedule III (e.g., Klein report of FDA analysis of CSA 8 Factors, 1994). It is present in many over the counter and prescription medicines for smoking cessation, which are used by millions of consumers in the U.S. The process of approval of a nicotine nasal spray for smoking cessation precipitated the convening of the FDA's Drug Abuse Advisory Committee and subsequently an evaluation by the Associate Commissioner for Health Affairs Dr. Stuart Nightingale and the Interagency Committee on Drug Control to consider whether or not nicotine nasal spray should be placed in the Controlled Substances Act (FDA, 1995, 1996). In brief, the Interagency Committee recommended, and FDA and NIDA concurred, that public health would be better served by not placing nicotine in the CSA.

There are many such examples of substances and products that may meet technical criteria for placement in CSA; however, the dextromethorphan and nicotine experiences are noteworthy for the deliberations in which it was clear that the more important questions were not *'could they be so placed?' (they clearly could) but rather 'should they be so placed?'* In other words, was public health better served by not scheduling them, but rather ensuring surveillance and oversight and appropriate regulation under the FDCA? In these cases and many others involving prescription and over the counter medicines and dietary supplements the answer has been that public health is often better served by not scheduling substances and products that could be scheduled. In other words, public health is often best served by applying the most appropriate regulatory tools.¹³

Similarly, the botanical dietary supplements St. John's Wort, Valerian, and Kava Kava have not been scheduled, despite the fact that all three are known to have "reinforcing effects," act as sedatives, and have been the subject of hundreds or thousands of calls to Poison Control Centers in the past six years. Nor have guarana or kola nut been placed into a schedule under the CSA, despite the fact that both are used for increased energy and have certain characteristics of a drug of abuse. The inevitable conclusion from the decisions not to control these substances is that not every substance with

¹³ By disclosure and way of experience, Dr. Henningfield participated in the nicotine considerations representing NIDA and serving on Commissioner Kessler's interagency tobacco and nicotine working group, and Dr. Nightingale's committee, on the nicotine scheduling issues in 1994-1996, as well as in NIDA's recommendations against scheduling nicotine gum and patch products. Dr. Henningfield and other members of PinneyAssociates developed the 8-Factor Analysis of dextromethorphan for the Consumer Healthcare Products Association that supported its position that although dextromethorphan met criteria for scheduling, public health would be better served by more appropriate regulation, and surveillance, and efforts by product manufactures to discourage inappropriate use, and this position was supported by FDA's advisory committees and ultimately FDA itself.

characteristics potentially indicative of mild abuse potential merit scheduling, but rather that these substances can be adequately regulated through the existing authority of the FDCA.

The long history of use of kratom demonstrates a pattern of use consistent with other consumer products such as coffee and botanical dietary supplements. The history of use combined with the pharmacology of kratom lead to the conclusion that kratom has a very low potential for abuse, and that its abuse potential is on par with, or lower than, other unscheduled substances.

4.2 Kratom has a dependence liability consistent with unscheduled substances

As described in this 8-Factor Analysis, kratom overall has a low potential for abuse, dependence, and public health harm, and consideration of all 8 factors does not provide a compelling case that kratom should be placed in the CSA. The data show little tendency among kratom consumers to increase their dose to their personal detriment or to the point of addiction, as is indicative of growing dependence. Furthermore, the data demonstrate that increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, with little additional mood enhancement. There have been no reports in TEDS of consumers seeking treatment for dependence, nor have treatment clinics recommended monitoring such reports. These typical indicators of dependence – increased dosing and dependence treatment – are not present with kratom, which strongly suggests that its dependence potential is low or even negligible.

Nor are observed reinforcing effects indicative of physical or psychological dependence. The reinforcing effects are described as mild and comparable to caffeinated beverages such as coffee or tea. These mild reinforcing effects are unrelated to physical dependence, and do not rise to the level of even limited psychological dependence. In addition, due to the very low bioavailability of MG and 7-OH-MG (only 3.03% bioavailable in kratom), huge quantities of kratom would need to be consumed to obtain the effects seen after taking a pure mu opioid such as morphine. The result is that kratom shows a very low dependence profile comparable to or lower than that of other unscheduled substances.¹⁴

¹⁴ See, e.g., Memorandum from Dr. Catherine Dormitzer et al., FDA Epidemiologist, to Dr. Michael Klein, Controlled Substance Staff, regarding Abuse, Misuse, and Overdose of Dextromethorphan-Containing Products at 9 (Dec. 1, 2009) (describing 14 counts of “Drug Dependence” for dextromethorphan-containing products).

Notably, the dependence liability finding necessary for control under CSA does not direct an analysis of dependence generally, but rather dependence liability based on “abuse” of the product. See 21 USC 812(b). As discussed above and demonstrated by this analysis, there is very little actual or potential abuse of kratom. Not only does consumer use of the product not cause dependence, but it also does not rise to abuse, which is the focus of the CSA in assessing dependence liability.

4.3 As a Matter of Law, Kratom Should Not Be Scheduled

The final finding for scheduling a drug or substance relates to its currently accepted medical use. 21 USC 812(b). The currently accepted medical use of a pharmaceutical drug is often straightforward, and FDA (or DEA) can easily establish whether a pharmaceutical drug has a currently accepted use in treatment of patients. Less clear is how this criterion may be applied to a non-pharmaceutical substance, such as a dietary supplement. A dietary supplement is a product intended to supplement the diet that contains certain types of ingredients, including botanical ingredients, and is not approved or authorized for investigation as a drug. 21 USC 321(ff). Consistent with the regulatory scheme of the FDCA, a dietary supplement is not marketed with claims of efficacy for medical use – indeed, if a dietary supplement included such claims it would likely meet the standards for regulation as a drug product under the FDCA. See 21 USC 321(g)(1), 355(a). Accordingly, as a dietary supplement, while kratom has a long history of use in the US consistent with other well-known dietary supplements, it, like all other dietary supplements and a broad range of consumer products, does not have a currently accepted medical use as that term has come to be defined under the CSA.

The CSA is specific in defining the three findings required to place a substance in each schedule, and except as required by international agreements and except for immediate precursors, “a drug or other substance may not be placed in any schedule unless the findings required for such schedule are made with respect to such drug or other substance.” 21 USC 812(b). Schedules II through V all require a finding that the substance has a “currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.” *Id.* In contrast, only Schedule I permits the scheduling of a drug without a currently accepted medical use, but Schedule I also requires a finding that the drug or substance has a “high potential for abuse” and a “lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.” 21 USC 812(b)(1).

As written, the CSA requires that all three findings must be made to place a substance in a schedule; therefore, a substance that does not fit all three findings for any schedule

cannot be placed in any schedule. 21 USC 812(b).¹⁵ The Federal Circuit Courts of Appeals have applied this requirement. In *Americans for Safe Access v. DEA*, 706 F.3d 438, 442 (D.C. Cir. 2013), the DC Circuit stated that marijuana could not be rescheduled to Schedules III, IV, or V without a currently accepted medical use, because a currently accepted medical use is a requirement of those schedules. Likewise, in *Grinspoon v. DEA*, 828 F.2d 881 (1st Cir. 1987), the First Circuit found that all three findings are necessary before a substance maybe be scheduled. The court held that “[t]he CSA clearly provides that a substance may not be placed in Schedule I unless it lacks *both* a ‘currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States’ and ‘accepted safety for use... under medical supervision,’” *Grinspoon* at 887, and also found that “the CSA also requires substances identified for placement in Schedule I to have a ‘high potential for abuse,’” *id.* at 892.¹⁶

A plain reading of the CSA language that “a drug or other substance may not be placed in any schedule unless the findings required for such schedule are made with respect to such drug or other substance” is also consistent with the purposes of the statute. The CSA was not intended to control every substance with any indicia that may indicate a potential for abuse, regardless of the nature of the substance. Instead, Congress was focused on certain kinds of substances, with others appropriately regulated by other federal and state statutory schemes. In fact, Congress expressly stated that the CSA is to be used to control substances that “have a *substantial* and detrimental effect on the health and general welfare of the American people.” 21 USC 801(2) (emphasis added). Consistent with this approach, FDA and DEA have never scheduled consumer products with some characteristics in common with drugs of abuse, such as caffeine, herbs and other natural products, and solvents or household cleaners. Kratom, as a dietary substance, does not have an accepted medical use as that term is defined under the CSA, but it also does not have a high potential for abuse or a substantial and

¹⁵ A federal agency is bound by the plain language of a statute if that language is unambiguous or capable of only one interpretation. “If the intent of Congress is clear, that is the end of the matter; for the court, as well as the agency, must give effect to the unambiguously expressed intent of Congress.” *Chevron v. Natural Res. Defense Council, Inc.*, 467 U.S. 837, 842-43 (1984).

¹⁶ While courts have discussed an alternative interpretation of the required findings for scheduling under the CSA, those cases have not resolved the issue as the ultimate ruling was on other grounds. See *Nat’l Org. for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) v. DEA*, 559 F.2d 735 (D.C. Cir. 1977) (considering the notion that a substance that lacks an acceptable medical use may be placed in Schedules II-V, contemplating that the findings required by the CSA function more as considerations than findings); *NORML v. DEA*, 559 F.2d at 747-48 (citing a discussion in *United States v. Maiden*, 355 F. Supp. 743, 748-49 n.4 (D. Conn. 1973), in which the district court stated that the three findings could not be “cumulative” and that a drug with no currently accepted medical use should be placed in Schedule I, “whether or not the potential for abuse is higher than for other drugs, so long as the abuse potential is not minimal.”); *NORML v. Bell*, 488 F. Supp. 123, 140 (D.D.C. 1980) (same).

detrimental effect on the health or general welfare of the American people. It is another example of a substance that is outside the intended coverage of the CSA.

As reflected by the analysis of the 8 factors above demonstrating that kratom has an abuse potential and a dependence liability similar to other unscheduled substances, it is not necessary to diverge from the CSA requirement that all three findings must be made to place a substance in a schedule, because kratom's low potential for abuse, low risk for dependence, and impact on the public health demonstrate that it is not appropriate for control under the CSA and can be appropriately regulated comparably to other unscheduled substances outside of the CSA.

4.4 As a Matter of Public Policy, Kratom Should Not Be Scheduled

There are significant costs and tenuous benefits to scheduling kratom. The decision to schedule a drug commits significant governmental resources (including personnel for enforcement) at a great cost to be ultimately borne by the public. These resources are ultimately diverted from enforcing the CSA against the illicit use of other controlled substances – substances that, when compared to kratom, pose a far greater threat to the public health. Consumers of kratom will also bear the social costs of scheduling, and the consequences of enforcement or noncompliance are likely to fall at least in equal measure on the kratom users with the longest history of use, namely, immigrant families from Southeast Asia (JEH discussions with Hmong community members in Minnesota; Axelrod and Windell, 2012, p. 56). Like other kratom consumers who have safely integrated kratom use into their daily habits with no negative consequences to health, family, or work obligations, these communities may have difficulty accepting the scheduling of a substance with a long history of safe use among community members, and scheduling may contribute to a spike in illegality and attendant social ills. If kratom is scheduled, some consumers will inevitably turn to other products, including narcotic drugs, or underground sources of kratom that are not regulated for purity, quality, or accuracy of labeling claims. See Section 3.6. Other individuals may try to continue to use kratom despite scheduling, and ultimately end up in the criminal justice system because of the use of a product with very low risk to the individuals, their families, or their communities.

In exchange, no public health crisis is solved by scheduling kratom. As demonstrated in the analysis above, kratom use has not promoted crime or violence. It does not sap the productivity of consumers or jeopardize their health. Its effects are mild and are generally reported to involve alertness and mood enhancement, comparable to the effects of coffee. The product has low intrinsic attractiveness and has not been associated in published literature with single-substance deaths. The significant and detrimental impact of scheduling on government resources and, more importantly, consumers is not justified by kratom's effects.

Permitting kratom and its constituents to remain unscheduled does not abrogate all control over these products. Current FDA authority under the FDCA can be used to

better ensure the purity and safety of the product available in the US marketplace, while scheduling under the CSA would divert resources from more critical initiatives, have a significant negative impact on kratom consumers, and do little to improve the public health. The FDCA provides FDA the authority to ensure that labeling of kratom products is not false or misleading in any particular. See 21 USC 343. This includes the requirement to accurately identify the product and any additional ingredients and to not misrepresent the MG or 7-OH-MG content of the product. FDA can also regulate misbranding of the product through claims made in labeling, including promotional advertising. Specifically, FDA retains the authority to take action against promotional claims that imply therapeutic use without sufficient supporting evidence. See 21 USC 352, 355. Nor is FDA alone in this endeavor. States may also take steps to appropriately regulate kratom, as they have done with a wide variety of other products not placed into a schedule under CSA. For example, some states have already set a minimum age to purchase or consume kratom,¹⁷ and others are studying its effects to educate citizens and guide future policy.¹⁸

5 Conclusion

We do not recommend scheduling of kratom or any of its specific alkaloids under the Controlled Substances Act. Kratom has a low potential for abuse and a low dependence liability and there is insufficient evidence of personal harm, adverse health effects or detriment to the public health to warrant control under the CSA. Effectively banning the availability of kratom through scheduling could precipitate public health problems that do not presently exist or are at very low levels, because this would shift the market place from a largely lawful retail market to illicit manufacturers and distributors with no regulated labeling, purity or content standards, or effective ability to remove adulterated products from the market. Appropriate regulation of kratom under the FDCA is the most effective way to protect the public health by ensuring appropriate access and oversight and to sustain the overall very low adverse personal and public health effects associated with kratom consumption.

¹⁷ Currently Illinois and Louisiana restrict the sale of kratom to people over the age of 18. See 720 Ill. Comp. Stat. 642/5; La. Stat. § 40:989.3. New York is considering restricting its sale to people over the age of 21, see N.Y. Assembly Bill A9121, and North Carolina is considering restricting its sale to people over the age of 18, see N.C. S.B.830.

¹⁸ AB 4431 is pending in New Jersey to restrict the sale of kratom. SB830 is pending in North Carolina and would require a study of kratom by state authorities. Neither state had taken final action on either bill at the time of writing.

6 References

- Addicott, M.A. (2014). Caffeine Use Disorder: A Review of the Evidence and Future Implications. *Current Addiction Reports* 1(3): 186-192.
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (1980). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, 3th edition (DSM-III). Arlington, VA.
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, 4th edition (DSM-IV). Arlington, VA.
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, 5th edition (DSM-5). Arlington, VA.
- American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM) (2016). Definition of Addiction. Accessed from <http://www.asam.org/quality-practice/definition-of-addiction> on 17 November 2016.
- Anwar M., Law R., Schier J. (2016). Notes from the Field: Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) Exposures Reported to Poison Centers - United States, 2010-2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 65(29):748-9.
- Assanangkornchai S., Muekthong A., Sam-Angsri N., Pattanasattayawong U. (2007). The Use of *Mitragynine speciosa* ("Kratom"), an addictive plant, in Thailand. *Substance Use & Misuse* 42(14):2145-57.
- Ator N.A., Griffiths R.R. (2003). Principles of drug abuse liability assessment in laboratory animals. *Drug Alcohol Depend* 70(3 Suppl):S55-72.
- Axelrod B.N., Windell J. (2012). *Dissertation Solutions: A Concise Guide to Planning, Implementing, and Surviving the Dissertation Process*. (p. 56 in E-Book version). Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Education.
- Aziz, Z. (2014). Kratom: The epidemiology, use and abuse, addiction potential, and legal status. In R.B. Raffa (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 309-320). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- Azizi J., Ismail S., Mordi M.N., Ramanathan S., Said M.I., Mansor S.M. (2010). In vitro and in vivo effects of three different *Mitragyna speciosa* korth leaf extracts on phase II drug metabolizing enzymes--glutathione transferases (GSTs). *Molecules* 15(1):432-41.
- Backstrom B.G., Classon G., Löwenhielm P., Thelander G. (2010). Krypton—new, deadly internet drug. Since October 2009 have nine young persons died in Sweden. *Lakartidningen* 107(50):3196–3197.

Bigelow G.E., Griffiths R.R., Liebson I.A. (1977). Pharmacological influences upon human ethanol self-administration. *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology* 85B:523-38.

Borota D., Murray E., Keceli G., Chang A., Watabe J. M., Ly M., Toscano J.P., Yassa, M. A. (2014). Post-study caffeine administration enhances memory consolidation in humans. *Nature Neuroscience* 17(2):201-203.

Botanical Education Alliance (2016). Results of survey of kratom vendors to estimate the number of vendors, and size of the market by consumers and kratom product vendors

Brunton L.L., Chabner B., Knollmann B.C. (Eds.). (2011). *Goodman & Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics* (12th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Cappelletti S., Daria P., Sani G., Aromatario M. (2015). Caffeine: Cognitive and Physical Performance Enhancer or Psychoactive Drug? *Current Neuropharmacology* 13(1):71-88.

Cone E.J., Fant R.V., Rohay J.M., Caplan Y.H., Ballina M., Reder R.F., Haddox J.D. (2003). Oxycodone involvement in drug abuse deaths. II. Evidence for toxic multiple drug-drug interactions. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 28(7):616-24.

Cone E.J., Fant R.V., Rohay J.M., Caplan Y.H., Ballina M., Reder R.F., Spyker D., Haddox J.D (2004). Oxycodone involvement in drug abuse deaths: a DAWN-based classification scheme applied to an oxycodone postmortem database containing over 1000 cases. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology*, 27(2):57-67.

Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) (2010). Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the abuse potential of dextromethorphan and the public health benefits and risks of this ingredient as a cough suppressant. Briefing materials submitted to the FDA: For the Meeting of the FDA Drug Safety and Risk Management Committee, September 14, 2010 [Docket No. FDA-2010-N-0001]. Henningfield report on file.

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (2016). Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine Background Information and Evaluation of 'Three Factor Analysis' for Temporary Scheduling. Docket No. DEA-2016-0015-0004.

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) (2015). Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) drug profile. Accessed from <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drug-profiles/kratom> on 15 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2010a). Guidance for Industry: Assessment of Abuse Potential of Drugs. Accessed from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/drugs/guidancecomplianceregulatoryinformation/guidances/ucm198650.pdf> on 11 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2010b). Overview of the September 14, 2010, DSaRM Advisory Committee Meeting to Discuss the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Request for an Abuse Potential Evaluation and Scheduling Recommendation for Dextromethorphan (DXM). Accessed from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/advisorycommittees/drugs/ucm224446.pdf> on 17 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2015). Guidance for Industry: Abuse-Deterrent Opioids — Evaluation and Labeling. Accessed from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/drugs/guidancecomplianceregulatoryinformation/guidances/ucm334743.pdf> on 17 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (1995). Regulations restricting the sale and distribution of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products to protect children and adolescents; proposed rule analysis regarding FDA's jurisdiction over nicotine-containing cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products; notice. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration. Federal Register, 60: 41314-41792. Silver Spring, MD.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (1996). Regulations restricting the sale and distribution of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco to protect children and adolescents; final rule. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration. Federal Register, 61: 44396-45318. Silver Spring, MD.

Garrett B.E., Griffiths R.R. (2001). Intravenous nicotine and caffeine: subjective and physiological effects in cocaine abusers. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*, 296(2):486-494.

Garrett B.E., Griffiths R.R. (2001). Intravenous nicotine and caffeine: subjective and physiological effects in cocaine abusers. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 296(2):486-94.

Gauvin D.V., Carl K.L., Briscoe R.J., Vallett M., Holloway F.A. (1995). Cross-generalization between cocaine cue and two antihistamines. *European Journal of Pharmacology* 294(1):281-8.

Gavend M., Mallaret M., Dematteis M., Baragatti G. (1995). Discriminative stimulus properties of dextromethorphan in rats. *Biomedicine & Pharmacotherapy* 49(10):456-64.

Geller, A.I., Shehab, N., Weidle, N.J., Lovegrove, M.C., Wolpert, B.J., Timbo, B.B., Mozersky, R.P., Budnitz, D.S. (2015). Emergency department visits for adverse events related to dietary supplements. *New England Journal of Medicine* 373:1531-1540.

Gogineni V., Leon F., Avery B., McCurdy C.R., Cutler S. (2014). Phytochemistry of *Mitragyna speciosa*. In R.B. Raffa (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 77-94). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Goldberg S.R., Spealman R.D., Risner M.E., Henningfield J.E. (1983). Control of behavior by intravenous nicotine injections in laboratory animals. *Pharmacology Biochemistry & Behavior* 19:1011-1020.

Goldstein E.R., Ziegenfuss T., Kalman D., Kreider R., Campbell B., Wilborn C., Taylor L., Willoughby D., Stout J., Graves B.S., Wildman R., Ivy J.L., Spano M., Smith A.E., Antonio J. (2010). International society of sports nutrition position stand: caffeine and performance. *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition* 7(1):5.

Griffiths R.R., Evans S.M., Heishman S.J., Preston K.L., Sannerud C.A., Wolf B., Woodson P.P. (1990). Low-dose caffeine discrimination in humans. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*. 252(3):970-8.

Griffiths R.R., Woodson P.P. (1988). Reinforcing effects of caffeine in humans. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*. 246(1):21-9.

Gudin J.A., Mogali S., Jones J.D., Comer S.D. (2013). Risks, management, and monitoring of combination opioid, benzodiazepines, and/or alcohol use. *Postgraduate Medicine*, 125(4):115–130.

Hanson G.R., Venturelli P.J., Fleckenstein A.E. (2014). *Drugs and Society* (12th ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Harun N., Hassan Z., Navaratnam V., Mansor S.M., Shoaib M. (2015). Discriminative stimulus properties of mitragynine (kratom) in rats. *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 232(13):2227-38.

Hasin D.S., O'Brien C.P., Auriacombe M., Borges G., Bucholz K., Budney A., Compton W.M., Crowley T., Ling W., Petry N.M., Schuckit M., Grant B.F. (2013). DSM-5 criteria for substance use disorders: recommendations and rationale. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 170(8):834–851.

Hassan Z., Muzaimi M., Navaratnam V., Yusoff N.H., Suhaimi F.W., Vadivelu R., Vicknasingam B.K., Amato D., von Hörsten S., Ismail N.I., Jayabalan N., Hazim A.I., Mansor S.M., Müller C.P. (2013). From Kratom to mitragynine and its derivatives: physiological and behavioural effects related to use, abuse, and addiction. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, 37(2):138-51.

Henningfield J.E. (2015). Written summary of oral testimony for the State of Wisconsin Controlled Substances Board. Accessed from http://dsps.wi.gov/Documents/Board%20Services/Agenda%20Materials/Controlled%20Substances/2015/20150814_CSB_Additional_Material.pdf on 16 November 2016.

Henningfield J.E., Fant R.V., Buchhalter A.R., Stitzer M.L. (2005). Pharmacotherapy of nicotine dependence. *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* 55:281-299.

Henningfield J.E., Goldberg S.R. (1985). Stimulus properties of nicotine in animals and human volunteers: A review. In: Seiden L.S., Balster R.L. (Eds.), *Behavioral Pharmacology: The Current Status* (pp. 433-449). New York, Alan R. Liss.

Henningfield J.E., Smith T.T., Kleykamp B.A., Fant R.V., Donny E.C. (2016). Nicotine self-administration research: the legacy of Steven R. Goldberg and implications for regulation, health policy, and research. *Psychopharmacology* 233(23):3829–3848.

Holler J.M., Vorce S.P., McDonough-Bender P.C., Magluilo Jr. J., Solomon C.J., Levine B. (2011). Drug toxicity death involving propylhexedrine and mitragynine. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 35:54–59.

Jackson A., Stephens D.N., Duka T. (2001). A low dose alcohol drug discrimination in social drinkers: relationship with subjective effects. *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 157(4):411-20.

Janchawee B., Keawpradub N., Chittrakarn S., Prasetho S., Wararatananurak P., Sawangjareon K. (2007) A high performance liquid chromatographic method for determination of mitragynine in serum and its application to a pharmacokinetic study in rats. *Biomedical Chromatography* 21:176–183.

Kamboj A., Spiller H.A., Casavant M.J., Chounthirath T., Smith G.A. (2016). Pediatric exposure to e-cigarettes, nicotine, and tobacco products in the United States. *Pediatrics* 137(6):e20160041.

Kapp F.G., Maurer H.H., Auwarter V., Winkelmann M., Hermanns-Clausen M. (2011). Intrahepatic cholestasis following abuse of powdered kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*). *Journal of Medical Toxicology* 7:227–231.

Karinen R., Fosen J.T., Rogde S., Vindenes V. (2014). An accidental poisoning with mitragynine. *Forensic Science International* 245(32):24.

Klein M. (1994). Testimony to the Drug Abuse Advisory Committee. Meeting No. 27: Abuse Liability Assessment of Nicotine Nasal Spray, Food and Drug Administration. August 1, 1994. Proceedings Transcription (pp. 150-160). Washington, DC: SAG Corp.

Kronstrand R., Roman M., Thelander G., Eriksson A. (2011). Unintentional fatal intoxications with mitragynine and O-desmethylnaloxone from the herbal blend Krypton. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 35(4):242-247.

Kruegel A.C., Gassaway M.M., Kapoor A., Váradi A., Majumdar S., Filizola M., Javitch J.A., Sames D. (2016). Synthetic and receptor signaling explorations of the mitragynine alkaloids: Mitragynine as an atypical molecular framework for opioid receptor modulators. *Journal of the American Chemical Society* 138(21):6754-64.

Lachenmeier D.W., Sproll C., Musshoff F. (2010). Poppy seed foods and opiate drug testing—where are we today? *Therapeutic Drug Monitoring* 32(1):11-18.

Lanier R., Fant R.V., Cone E.J., Henningfield J.E. (2016). Assessment of the Abuse Potential and Benefits of Kratom and its Mitragynine Alkaloids: Implications for Regulation. Poster presented at the College on Problems of Drug Dependence 78th Annual Scientific Meeting, Palm Springs, CA.

Lelas S., Gerak L.R., France C.P. (2000). Antagonism of the discriminative stimulus effects of positive γ -aminobutyric acid(A) modulators in rhesus monkeys discriminating midazolam. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 294(3):902-908.

Macko E., Weisbach J.A., Douglas B. (1972). Some observations on the pharmacology of mitragynine. *Archives Internationales de Pharmacodynamie et de Therapie* 198:145–161.

Maruyama T., Kawamura M., Kikura-Hanajiri R., Takayama H., Goda Y. (2009). The botanical origin of kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*; Rubiaceae) available as abused drugs in the Japanese markets. *Journal of Natural Medicines* 63:340–344.

Matsumoto K., Hatori Y., Murayama T., Tashima K., Wongseripipatana S., Misawa K., Kitajima M., Takayama H., Horie S. (2006). Involvement of μ -opioid receptors in antinociception and inhibition of gastrointestinal transit induced by 7-hydroxymitragynine, isolated from Thai herbal medicine *Mitragyna speciosa*. *European Journal of Pharmacology* 549:63-70.

Matsumoto K., Horie S. (2014). Analgesic effects of mitragynine analogs. In R.B. Raffa (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 177-194). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Matsumoto K., Horie S., Ishikawa H., Takayama H., Aimi N., Ponglux D., Watanabe K. (2004). Antinociceptive effect of 7-hydroxymitragynine in mice: Discovery of an orally active opioid analgesic from the Thai medicinal herb *Mitragyna speciosa*. *Life Science* 74(17):2143-55.

Matsumoto K., Mizowaki M., Suchitra T., Takayama H., Sakai S., Aimi N., Watanabe H. (1996). Antinociceptive action of mitragynine in mice: evidence for the involvement of supraspinal opioid receptors. *Life Sciences* 59:1149–1155.

McIntyre I.M., Trochta A., Stolberg S., Campman S.C. (2015). Mitragynine 'Kratom' related fatality: a case report with postmortem concentrations. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 39:152–155.

McMahon L.R., Gerak L.R., Carter L., Ma C., Cook J.M., France C.P. (2002). Discriminative stimulus effects of benzodiazepine (bz)1 receptor-selective ligands in rhesus monkeys. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 300(2):505-512.

McWhirter L., Morris S. (2010). A case report of inpatient detoxification after kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) dependence. *European Addiction Research* 16:229-231.

Meredith S.E., Juliano L.M., Hughes J.R., Griffiths R.R. (2013). Caffeine use disorder: A comprehensive review and research agenda. *Journal of Caffeine Research* 3(3):114-130.

Moeller M.R., Hammer K., Engel O. (2004) Poppy seed consumption and toxicological analysis of blood and urine samples. *Forensic Science International* 143(2-3):183-186.

National Capital Poison Center (2016). Poison Statistics: National Data 2014. Accessed from <http://www.poison.org/poison-statistics-national> on 15 November 2016.

National Forensic Laboratory Information System (2015). 2015 Midyear Report. Accessed from https://www.nflis.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/0DesktopModules/ReportDownloads/Reports/NFLIS_MidYear2015.pdf.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (2016). The Science of Drug Abuse and Addiction: The Basics. Accessed from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/media-guide/science-drug-abuse-addiction-basics> on 17 November 2016.

Neerman M.F., Frost R.E., Deking J. (2013). A drug fatality involving Kratom. *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 58(1):1556-4029.

O'Brien C. (2011). Drug addiction. In: Brunton L.B., Chabner B.A, and Knollmann B.C. (Eds.), Goodman & Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics (12th ed.) (pp. 607-629). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

O'Brien C. (1996). Drug addiction. In: Hardman J.G., Limbird L.E., Molinoff P.B., Ruddon R.W. (Eds.), Goodman & Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics (9th ed.) (pp. 557-578). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Ossiander E.M. (2014). Using textual cause-of-death data to study drug poisoning deaths. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 179(7):884-94.

Parthasarathy S., Ramanathan S., Ismail S., Adenan M.I., Mansor S.M., Murugaiyah V. (2010). Determination of mitragynine in plasma with solid-phase extraction and rapid HPLC-UV analysis, and its application to a pharmacokinetic study in rat. *Analytical and Bioanalytical Chemistry* 397(5):2023-30.

Philipp A.A., Wissenbach D.K., Weber A.A., Zapp J., Maurer H.H. (2010). Phase I and II metabolites of speciogynine, a diastereomer of the main kratom alkaloid mitragynine, identified in rat and human urine by liquid chromatography coupled to low- and high-resolution linear ion trap mass spectrometry. *Journal of Mass Spectrometry* 45:1344–1357.

Preston K.L., Wolf B., Guarino J.J., Griffiths R.R. (1992). Subjective and behavioral effects of diphenhydramine, lorazepam and methocarbamol: evaluation of abuse liability. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 262(2):707-20.

Prozialeck W.C., Jivan J.K., Andurkar S.V. (2012). Pharmacology of kratom: an emerging botanical agent with stimulant, analgesic and opioid-like effects. *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association* 112:792–799.

Raffa R. (Ed.). (2015). *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Ramanathan S., Mansor S.M. (2015). Toxicology of mitragynine and analogs. In: Raffa R. (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 281-296). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Reissig C.J., Carter L.P., Johnson M.W., Mintzer M.Z., Klinedinst M.A., Griffiths R.R. (2012). High doses of dextromethorphan, an NMDA antagonist, produce effects similar to classic hallucinogens. *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 223(1):1-15.

Rosenbaum C.D., Carreiro S.P., Babu K.M. (2012). Here today, gone tomorrow...and back again? A review of herbal marijuana alternatives (K2, spice), synthetic cathinones (bath salts), kratom, *Salvia divinorum*, methoxetamine, and piperazines. *Journal of Medical Toxicology* 8:15–32.

Rudd R.A., Aleshire N., Zibbell J.E., Gladden R.M. (2016). Increases in drug and opioid overdose deaths — United States, 2000–2014. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 64(50):1378-82.

Sabetghadam A., Ramanathan S., Sasidharan S., Mansor S.M. (2013). Subchronic exposure to mitragynine, the principal alkaloid of *Mitragyna speciosa*, in rats. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 146(3):815-23.

Schnoll S.H., Henningfield J.E. FDA incentivizing Pharma to develop less abusable pain medicines. National Pain Report, Alternative Pain Therapy, Government. August 5, 2016. Accessed from <http://nationalpainreport.com/fda-incentivizing-pharma-to-develop-less-abusable-pain-medicines-8831082.html> on 17 November 2016.

Schuster C.R., Henningfield J. (2003). Conference on abuse liability assessment of CNS drugs. *Drug Alcohol Depend* 70(3 Suppl):S1-4.

Scott T.M., Yeakel J.K., Logan B.K. (2014). Identification of mitragynine and O-desmethylnaloxone in kratom and legal high products sold online. *Drug Testing and Analysis* 6:959–963.

Shamima A.R., Fakurazi S., Hidayat M.T., Hairuszah I., Moklas M.A., Arulselvan P. (2012). Antinociceptive action of isolated mitragynine from *Mitragyna speciosa* through activation of opioid receptor system. *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* 13:11427–11442.

Singh D., Müller C.P., Vicknasigam B.K. (2014). Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) dependence, withdrawal symptoms and craving in regular users. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 139:132-137.

- Sufka K.J., Loria M.J., Lewellyn K., Zjawiony J.K., Ali Z., Abe N., Khan I.A. (2014). The effect of *Salvia divinorum* and *Mitragyna speciosa* extracts, fraction and major constituents on place aversion and place preference in rats. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 151(1):361-4.
- Suwanlert S. (1975). Study of kratom eaters in Thailand. *Bulletin on Narcotics* 27:21-27.
- Swogger M.T., Hart E., Erowid F., Erowid E., Trabold N., Yee K., Parkhurst K.A., Priddy B.M., Walsh Z. (2015). Experiences of kratom users: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 47(5):360-367.
- Takayama H. (2004). Chemistry and pharmacology of analgesic indole alkaloids from the rubiaceous plant, *Mitragyna speciosa*. *Chemical and Pharmaceutical Bulletin (Tokyo)* 52:916–928.
- Takayama H., Ishikawa H., Kurihara M., Kitajima M., Aimi N., Ponglux D., Koyama F., Matsumoto K., Moriyama T., Yamamoto L.T., Watanabe K., Murayama T., Horie S. (2002). Studies on the synthesis and opioid agonistic activities of mitragynine-related indole alkaloids: Discovery of opioid agonists structurally different from other opioid ligands. *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* 45:1949–1956.
- Tanguay P. (2011). Kratom in Thailand: Decriminalisation and community control. Accessed from <https://www.tni.org/files/download/kratom-briefing-dlr13.pdf> on 31 July 2015.
- Thevis M., Opfermann G., Schänzer W. (2003). Urinary concentrations of morphine and codeine after consumption of poppy seeds. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 27(1):53-56.
- Trakulsrichai S., Sathirakul K., Auparakkitanon S., Krongvorakul J., Sueajai J., Noumjad N., Sukasem C., Wananukul W. (2015). Pharmacokinetics of mitragynine in man. *Drug Design, Development and Therapy* 9:2421-2429.
- U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) (2014). Can Poppy Seeds Cause A Positive Drug Test? Accessed from <http://www.usada.org/can-poppyseeds-cause-a-positive-drug-test/> on 22 November 2016.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) (2010). How tobacco smoke causes disease: The biology and behavioral basis for smoking-attributable disease: A report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
- Ward J., Rosenbaum C., Hernon C., McCurdy C.R., Boyer E.W. (2011). Herbal medicines for the management of opioid addiction: safe and effective alternatives to conventional pharmacotherapy? *CNS Drugs*, 25(12):999-1007.

Warner M.L., Kaufman N.C., Grundmann O. (2016). The pharmacology and toxicology of kratom: from traditional herb to drug of abuse. *International Journal of Legal Medicine* 130(1):127-38.

Yusoff N.H., Suhaimi F.W., Vadivelu R.K., Hassan Z., Rümmler A., Rotter A., Amato D., Dringenberg H.C., Mansor S.M., Navaratnam V., Müller C.P. (2016). Abuse potential and adverse cognitive effects of mitragynine (kratom). *Addiction Biology* 21(1):98-110.

Attachment A: Testimonies of Kratom Consumers

This document contains the testimonies of responsible kratom users, as compiled by the American Kratom Association between September 19th and September 21st, 2016

My name's [REDACTED], I'm 32 years old and I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and Degenerative Disc Disease. For the past ten years I have undergone exhausting physical therapy sessions and counseling to deal with this illness and pain. Over the years my tolerance to opioid prescriptions has climbed and I made the decision, with the help of my doctors, to lower my doses as much as possible. In Spring 2016, a family member asked me if I had tried an herbal supplement called Kratom. I decided to give it a try as I was at a point where I'd be willing to try almost anything to get rid of the pain. After a week I noticed my energy levels were back to where they were four or five years ago, and in six weeks my pain had subsided enough to let me work 8 hours a day up from only two or three before. Kratom has helped me to become a productive member of society again.

My Name is [REDACTED]. I am a 39 yr-old PR & marketing consultant. I have never been arrested. I have never been "into drugs". I am a business owner & productive member of society. I graduated magna cum laude from my university. I speak three languages fluently. I am the furthest thing from a "felon" or a "junkie", yet I have suffered from depression and suicidal thoughts since adolescence. At one point I was on three different antidepressants. I felt like a ZOMBIE. I became listless, tired all of the time. A shell of a person. I have been taking Kratom for the past year and I can tell you without a doubt that the United States & the world gets way more out of me as a member of society in terms of productivity, positivity & contribution than if I had not discovered this incredible herb. I take very small amounts every day. Since I started taking it, I frequently go days at a time without it, and I do not suffer any withdrawals, but yes, the depression does come back. But the feeling is NOT like an "addiction" feeling (I've tried to quit coffee, I know what addiction feels like). It's more like my symptoms of depression come back within a few days. If the DEA bans this substance, honest, hard-working people who are MUCH more productive members of society thanks to Kratom will be unjustly turned into felons, just because they want a better life for themselves and the people around them. So if this passes, you then leave people like us with three choices: 1) suicidal depression 2) zombie listlessness on prescriptions meds that don't work for us or 3) become a felon because we responsibly use a safe herb that is an incredible quality-of-life enhancer. If anybody in the DEA uses any sort of prescription drugs for any physical or mental ailment, I would like them to look in the mirror and ask themselves: how would you feel if by tomorrow you were considered a "felon" for taking that prescription? Feels unjust doesn't it? More than that, it feels like a huge step back for society as a whole. I understand there are people out there who overdose on everything. There are people overdosing on paint thinner & "whipits" from whipped cream cans, for crying out loud! But those of us using Kratom responsibly deserve to have access to a safe herb that helps our quality of life like NO other supplement or medication does. For us, for this country, for society, and for people productively contributing to this economy...Please keep Kratom legal.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 35 year old (returning) nursing student that has been married for ten years with two kids under the age of 15. I have MS and degenerative disc disease.(Black Disk disease to be specific) While being treated for my disc degeneration, I was prescribed massive amounts of painkillers. This line of treatment made it impossible for me to care for my daughter (who was three at the time), and my blind veteran father. I will never forget the conversation with my doctor; he told me I had no choice in treatment options and that horrid unresponsive state was my new reality. To quote him "You need to have a conversation with God if you want to get better." Then, by chance, I found Kratom. Once I started using this miraculous plant, I was able to come off the painkillers completely. I have since been diagnosed with MS and carpal tunnel syndrome. I have not missed a single day of work other than maternity leave because of the properties of kratom. During my maternity leave and for several days of testing a year, I intentionally miss my daily doses. The pain is excruciating. I can barely walk, the depression and anxiety that has come because of the MS is so fierce I am almost mentally paralyzed. To be sentenced back to

that almost comatose state would be a fate akin to death. I am who I am, a mother, student, wife, daughter, money earning member of society, because of kratom.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 44 year old female and up until March 2013 was employed as a federal police officer with the Federal Bureau of Investigation for 23 years. In 1996, I was diagnosed with systemic lupus and fibromyalgia, two chronic, life-long illnesses for which there is no cure. Lupus causes severe pain, stiffness, swelling, tenderness and warmth in your joints. Fibromyalgia symptoms are: deep muscle pain causes painful tender points, morning stiffness, sleep problems, fatigue and anxiety. For twenty years I have suffered daily with severe pain throughout my joints and muscles. In the fall of 2014, after being on eleven medications (prednisone, Flexeril, Zanaflex, Nucynta, Lyrica, triamcinolone, Lortab, gabapentin, synthroid, Tramadol, and nortriptyline) that really didn't help and prescribed to me by my rheumatologist and pain management doctors, I started to suffer serious side effects (blurry vision, short term memory problems, dizziness, headaches, weight gain, and leg cramps) from the combination of the medications. At this point in my life, I decided to taper down off of all prescribed medications. Shortly thereafter, and still suffering from severe joint pain, a friend suggested that I try kratom. I immediately researched and learned as much as I could about it. After a month long quest to learn as much as I could, I finally got up the nerve to try it. That was the day that I got my life back prior to being sick. The joint pain was gone. I felt like a new person. I am a wife, sister, friend, aunt, and best of all, a mother to my twelve year old daughter again.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 57 years old, I have been married for 36 years. I am the mother of three sons and grandmother of 3 beautiful granddaughters. I earned a college degree while working a full time job and raising our children. I have worked for the same company for over 35 years and currently hold the position of Senior Production Planner. I go to church every Sunday and I am a member of the choir. I am in good physical condition but have had arthritis in my knees for several years that I have treated with ibuprofen, Meloxicam, Tramadol for flare ups, and cortisone injections 2-3 times a year. A little over a year ago a family member suggested that I try kratom and I was amazed at how well it controls my pain without making me feel drugged - just completely normal and pain free! Since I started taking kratom I have stopped taking both ibuprofen and Tramadol, and have only had one cortisone injection in the last year.

My 59 year old husband retired in 2008 with 30 years of law enforcement at the rank of lieutenant. He was injured on duty in 1991 and as a result has had two fusion surgeries on his back. He has been in constant pain since then but has always resisted taking prescription pain medication because he does not like the way they make him feel. Since taking kratom he is also feeling and functioning much better now, working two part time jobs and is happy to be able to be productive with reduced pain.

I really can't say enough about this wonderful plant. I am now exercising regularly and I am about 15 pounds lighter than I was a year ago. I can now sit at my desk and work all day without hurting, and come home at the end of the day and take walks and play with my granddaughters instead of falling into my recliner until bedtime. I can work in my yard on the weekends and not be a burden to my children. I am much more active now than I was before taking kratom.

I know that our quality of life as productive members of society will not be the same without kratom. We have been hard working, tax-paying, law abiding citizens our whole lives and now the DEA wants to deprive us of the best option that we have found to treat our pain!

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 36 year old, father of two with one on the way. I am the sole provider for my family. I take Kratom to help with the pain and spasms associated with crohn's disease. It's helped me tremendously with managing the pain and some of the other symptoms that I have to deal with. I've been taking it for about 6 months now. It's a great alternative to the percocet prescribed by my Doctor. No ill effects from the Kratom and no dependency. I only have positive things to say about it. Pain pills make me tired, depressed and they take me out of focus and they make you dependant. None of this

is true about Kratom. I can now manage the symptoms associated with crohn's without the side effects of prescription medications. Prior to Kratom, I haven't had a solid stool in years, I didn't know I had crohn's until it got real bad and I had to have surgery to have a large section of my colon removed. Kratom has changed all that. A solid stool may not sound like something to get excited about, but to me, it means my gut is getting better! I think anyone dealing with this disease would want to know about it.

██████████ ██████████
██████████ FL

I am a 45 year old business owner who has been using kratom for 8 years. In 2001 I was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation and prescribed a plethora of pills in an effort to control it. I struggled with the side effects of those medications and the anxiety of dealing with a cardiac ailment that could cause problems in a moment's notice...there were many trips to the ER over the years. It affected my personal life as well as my professional life in the worst ways imaginable. Since using kratom regularly, I have not had a single issue with my heart rhythm. And best of all, not a single trip to the ER. I have no more of the negative side effects I experienced with drugs like beta blockers, digoxin and blood thinners. I am no longer terrified of leaving the house, no longer afraid of passing out (my blood pressure was dangerously low on betapace). I have a greater quality of life now more than I did. I am healthier, happier, more productive, and this plant has saved my life as far as I am concerned.

I am a law abiding citizen with zero criminal record, I volunteer my time and efforts to help others and kratom has given me a new lease on life. It also helps with intestinal inflammation that I struggled with, and anxiety - which is a big part of atrial fibrillation. Those are bonuses from using this plant regularly. I do NOT use this plant recreationally and I can guarantee you that I get more of a 'high' from cold medication at normal doses than I get from kratom. Banning this plant will take me back to square one: dealing with powerful, dangerous meds like digoxin and struggling to manage the dangerous side effects from the other meds that I will likely have to begin taking again. Please do not sentence me to have to deal with that struggle again. I solved it! Kratom allowed me to have my life again. Not being able to use it will literally be like turning the clock back on my health.

I am 38 years old, and I take kratom to help me manage depression, anxiety and menstrual cramps. I have tried Rx and OTC drugs, but the Rx's have horrific side effects and are not nearly as effective as kratom. The OTC meds also sometimes do not really reduce the pain I feel from cramps. Sometimes I feel so unwell I have to call off work. I do not like having to call off work. If this ban goes through, I know that my depression and anxiety will be so powerful and this is so scary. I see myself becoming weighed down with depression and anxiety and having to be in horrible pain once a month for cramps. It will be much more difficult to work each day, and I am sure I will have many more sick days if this ban goes through, maybe even having my job put at risk. I have an advanced degree with a professional job. I also see the quality of my life plummeting even outside of work. When I am depressed, anxious, or in pain, I don't want to go out, run errands, and I lose interest in hobbies, exercise, etc. Kratom helps me take on the day, so to speak. I have been using it for about 6 years and have found it to have such a positive effects on my physical and mental health. -██████████, ██████████ ██████████, CA

My name is ██████████. I am now 44 but started taking Kratom at age 39 to help ease my debilitating headaches after working as a nurse. I suffered a brain injury. I found that not only did the herbal supplement help my headaches, it helped with my cognitive impairment as well. I injured my back during the initial fall and multiple times during seizures. Kratom helps ease that pain as well. If the Kratom ban goes through I would be forced to rely on opiates for my pain control and be faced with the very certainty of becoming dependent on these medications. It's bad enough that my career and driving ability was ripped away from me. Now I just fall into an even deeper depression over the little choices I have, also

being taken away. Before I found Kratom I had attempted suicide 4 times, but haven't thought of it since. Thank you for hearing my story, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED] California

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 49 years old, I am a dad of four, married, a teacher and an ordained pastor with a Masters of Divinity from [REDACTED] Seminary. I graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in 1989, and with Honors from [REDACTED] Seminary in 2001. I've been teaching and preaching since 1989.

I also have used kratom for the past 3 years. I had a bad accident that damaged both my skull/brain, spine and my pelvis about 15 years ago--I fell on the ice outside my home. As a result of the TBI and spinal cord injury, plus the pelvic damage, I was in terrible pain and prescribed opioids which gave me horrible side effects. I was also diagnosed with fibromyalgia and got sleep apnea through all this. I was no longer able to work as a full time pastor or substitute teach anymore as I had been. After finding a doctor who was able to help me, I started using kratom for the remaining pain that was not alleviated by therapy, and also used it as a direct means to get me off ALL the opioid medications the other doctors had prescribed. In one year I was back both in my pulpit, and now am finishing up my Masters in Special Education. I would not be teaching and working without having access to kratom.

Bottom line: Do my degrees and graduating with honors mean a thing if I can't go to work? Does having a family, a spouse who loves me and a home mean a thing if you can't enjoy it? I went back to coaching my son's baseball team. That wouldn't have happened without the kratom. I teach. I preach. I'm active. It's from being well for the first time in years that I am able to be a productive part of society.

Sincerely,
Reverend [REDACTED] [REDACTED], B.A., M.Div.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 48 years old, married with two grown children. I work in the mental health field and I have for almost 30 years. For many years I have had trouble with degenerative disk disease, arthritis and spinal stenosis. I took multiple analgesics for many years. I do not like the way that narcotics make me feel. I did a lot of reading trying to find alternatives. I became very ill 2 years ago and was diagnosed with multiple autoimmune illnesses. I have Lupus, Sjogren's Syndrome and celiac disease. The fatigue and body aches from autoimmune can only be understood by someone else with the disease. I had never found a way out of pain with prescription medications. I kept reading. There was a time when I took almost 30 pills a day between prescription medications, vitamins and supplements. I felt ridiculous taking these handfuls of pills. I went to doctor's appointments all the time. They were at a loss and I could tell that they were tired of me. I kept reading. I found out about kratom from another person with autoimmune. I tried it and have not looked back. All I have wanted for these past several years is to participate in life and function normally. This is the first time in many years that I have functioned like a normal person. I have not taken any of those prescriptions for months. I have also not cancelled any plans, haven't missed any work and haven't slept around the clock. I have never been high from kratom. I am not sure how I would even do that - never tried! I found a minimal dose to live my life and I have never been happier. I love life. I love my family, my dogs, my job, my friends and my community. I refuse to be a criminal so I don't know what I will do if I can no longer have kratom, I have not really thought about it because it seems so unreal to me. Please help us. Please don't ban kratom.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 35 years old and married with two teenage boys. I have suffered from social anxiety, severe depression, and chronic pain for fifteen years. I've been prescribed many different types of medications for those disorders. All of the medications I've tried always caused me more problems than they solved. On prescription medications I was unable to work, and I couldn't take care of my family. Two years ago I found kratom. I've been taking kratom, one to two teaspoons in morning and at night when needed for two years. I am able to have quality relationships with my wife children and actually have friends now. My social anxiety would not allow that before. I am more balanced and put together than I've ever been. I have been working in the same job now for two years, and was recently promoted.

My life was a terrible mess when I had to use Pharmaceuticals. I don't want to go back to that mess. Please don't ban kratom.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 35 years old. I found kratom 9 years ago and it saved me from a terrible addiction to opiate pain pills. I have many issues including insomnia, anxiety, depression, scoliosis, two slipped discs in my back, and a bad hip. Because of kratom I don't need any prescriptions. It helps me with all my ailments. I'm afraid of what will happen to me if kratom becomes a schedule 1. I will be forced back into my addiction with pills. This is life or death for me. Kratom is a miracle plant for me where no pill ever helped the way Kratom does. It's safe and effective with no side effects. Save our beloved plant.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am only 32, and already medically retired from the Army. I take kratom for PTSD and OCD, after my doctor mentioned it. Before kratom, I was on over 17 different medications. All made my life worse. Caused me to become pre-diabetic, zoned out, worse mood swings, and didn't come close to touching anxiety enough to allow me to go to therapy. Now, with kratom, I am able to hold down a job as a veterinarian technician, and am able to be a part of my family. I can now make it to my daughter's recitals and games without being nervous or on edge. I can even talk in therapy without my anger and anxiety getting in the way. If kratom is taken from me, I will be taken away from my family. Either by the law taking me away because I refuse to stop taking kratom, or by death.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 53-year-old mother of three and grandmother to one with one on the way! Before Kratom I was riddled with pain, had become reclusive, and didn't see much of a future. I was depressed, drugged and miserable having to endure the amount of pain I was in. Pain medications made my existence lonely and dependant. It just didn't seem like life was worth living with so much pain until a medical professional friend of mine suggested I try Kratom. Since taking Kratom, I no longer need pain medications (such as Percocet, Dilaudid, and tramadol), anti-anxiety medications, and anti-depression medications!! ALL GONE! My life has turned completely around and I feel alive again. I now feel I have a future to look forward to and can be the wife, mother, and grandmother I've always wanted to be. Kratom has taken away my pain, my anxiety and the depression resulting from so much pain. I have my life back! I'm healthy, clear headed, happy, and look forward to my future again! When I'm asked what will I do if the DEA succeeds? I can honestly say that I have only two choices to consider; continue taking Kratom illegally, or I go back on narcotics in full time pain management thereby ruining my life and the lives around me! THERE IS NO OPTION here! I don't want to die but I don't want a life on narcotics either!

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a responsible 50 year old man and use kratom every evening to treat my restless leg syndrome. I have been using Kratom for 2 years. Prior to using Kratom, I treated my RLS with Oxycodone and Tramadol. After 4 years I became tolerant and addicted to the oxycodone and Tramadol. Those medications were hurting me, not helping me. I found kratom online and used it to detox. It took away 90 percent of my withdrawals. I continued to use it every night for the last 2 years and it eliminates this horrible condition. If kratom is made illegal, I will die on the oxycodone again. Please don't make me go down that dark road again. I am happy and productive again and have no ill side effects from kratom. It has proven very safe and effective for me when all the other medications failed me. [REDACTED].

I am a 40 year old mother of 6. I was diagnosed with lupus, Sjögren's syndrome, fibromyalgia, hypothyroidism and chronic fatigue shortly after my twins were born in 2010. I spent 2 years trying medication after medication, looking for relief. The drugs I was put on caused a 70 pound weight gain in 2 months. The steroids made me blow up like a balloon. One of the medications was causing me to go

blind. I couldn't lift my babies most days without crying out in pain. The fatigue kept me from playing and having fun with my children. I would lay in the floor and just cry some days because I was so miserable. I found out about kratom on a chronic pain forum and started researching. Within two months of trying it, I was weaning off the medications that were making me miserable. I was playing with my kids. I was cooking and cleaning and being the wife my husband deserved. My husband suffers from terrible disc degeneration. He is a mechanic and has to bend and twist all day long at his job. He tried kratom and he is now able to work through the day with minimal pain. Kratom has changed our lives and made us better parents. We aren't quite sure what we are going to do without it. - [REDACTED], Texas

I am a 42 year old self-employed businessman. I have never been addicted to drugs or alcohol. I have however, suffered from anxiety and a herniated disc between my L4-L5 lumbar vertebrae. For years I had been taking prescribed Lexapro for my anxiety. When I started consuming Kratom, I was able to quit taking Lexapro. It was more effective and had no side effects. The biggest thing in which Kratom helped me with was my back. I was scheduled to have a microdiscectomy 1.5 years ago when I re-injured my disc. The pain I was experiencing was excruciating. I was prescribed high power pain killers which had horrible side effects, such as extreme fatigue, mental cloudiness, and upset my stomach. I decided to try Kratom instead and it was a miracle. The pain was severely reduced and there were no ill side effects. I was able to take Kratom in my work day and stay focused mentally without feeling tired. Because of Kratom I was able to take my doctor's advice and wait 4 month to see if the herniation would heal itself enough to avoid surgery...and because of Kratom, I was able to do exactly that! Keep Kratom Legal! - [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], FL

I am a responsible adult working as a General Manager at a restaurant, work 70+ hours a week and at the same company for 7 years and have been a part of the top 10% of my company for 2 of those years. I am a responsible user of Kratom, I use it for an energy boost for my long work shifts, as well as depression issues, and back pain. My life would be detrimental without it. I feel that if I am able to drink caffeine, alcohol, or smoke cigarettes, all of which are far more detrimental to my health and kill millions of people a year, I should be able to use this tea in my daily life without question. I feel the DEA has overstepped their bounds, and we should have checks and balances in place for them. They shouldn't be able to make federal laws without going through the public, or the other branches of government first. Not to mention this is a perfect way to start a black market for this product which would increase crime. Canada, Mexico, and the origin countries of this plant are all legal, which means easy entrance to the USA. I am not a criminal or an irresponsible drug addict, I am a hardworking American who takes care of his family any way possible. Please sign on to the letter, there will be millions of people suffering because of this. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Tx

I came to use kratom because I needed something that helped me focus on my schoolwork as well as help me reduce stress and relax on a daily basis. Kratom allows me to be more effective at school and I continue be more relaxed as I use kratom. Nothing else has been effective in my life to reduce stress or other anxiety issues without being on prescription medication. I prefer kratom because it is simple and doesn't have any negative effects on people. Kratom is safer than pharmaceutical drugs, with important medicinal uses and has changed my life. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], NC

I am the mother of an incredible young woman who recently found Kratom and has been so much improved thanks to this wonderful plant. My daughter has been chronically ill since she was in elementary school. She was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis at that time. Since then, she's had many years of suffering through multiple surgeries and the side effects of having an autoimmune disease. To make matters worse, she has a permanent ileostomy, and eventually developed diabetes and arthritis. In spite

of her illnesses, through the years she somehow managed to fight for a "normal life" with a husband and two beautiful children. But every year, the battle gets harder and she gets more tired and discouraged. For the last few years, the only thing that has kept her going was an Rx narcotic, but with the "war on prescription drugs" raging, she was one of the people who truly needed her meds, but was forced by the "pain management center" to be taken off the med that kept her functioning in the world. In desperation, she searched the internet for something that could help and found Kratom. She got immediate relief from pain, stress and insomnia by using this tea only a few times weekly. Just when things finally were looking up and she was able to get out of bed, cook for her family, go to her kid's school activities, etc., the DEA announces that they are going to put this TEA on the same list as dangerous drugs! I'm begging the reconsideration of the decision. Since hearing about Kratom (I was very skeptical) I have learned about many other people who are getting their lives back from chronic pain, insomnia, depression and many other terrible ailments without having to use narcotics or dangerous drugs. This is a miracle for many Americans, please, don't take it away.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED], Kentucky

I am a 36 year old male with a degree in Marine Biology that suffers from OCD, Depression, and ADD. I currently work as a lumber associate and thanks to Mitragyna, I am able to get through many painful days due to my conditions. I absolutely am for educating the public.

[REDACTED], FL

I am a mother that suffered from fibromyalgia and lupus but now that I found Kratom I am free of my pain and I could live a happy life.

[REDACTED], TX

I am a 37 year old female and have dealt with severe social anxiety for all my life. After numerous highly addictive anxiety medication prescriptions, that did me far more harm than good, I researched herbal remedies for anxiety and came across Kratom. Kratom has saved me from a life controlled by severe anxiety that was so bad that at times I could not leave my house, work, or even drive. I am now a productive member of society. I am not an addict. I do not get "high." I do not even drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes. If this ban goes through, my life will return to a living hell.

I am a 57 year old male diagnosed with clinical depression and PTSD. Since discovering kratom 2 years ago, an occasional cup of kratom tea, approximately six times a week has dramatically reduced the anxiety/panic attacks associated with my PTSD. My doctor was very supportive. Because of kratom, I no longer have to take Xanax every four hours to keep the attacks at bay. The kratom also eliminated any withdrawal symptoms associated with the cessation of the Xanax. Furthermore, I find that I can go for several days to a week between consuming my kratom tea with no cravings. Truly a remarkable plant.

I have been on prescription pain meds for 15 years with little relief. I have fibromyalgia, lupus, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, degenerative disc disease, and mixed connective tissue disease. I have suffered for years in pain and am currently on permanent disability at age 46. Within 2 days of starting kratom (mostly red strains) I had no pain. I have not been pain free in 30 years! Kratom is my miracle.

[REDACTED], NE

I'm 63 years old, a writer and retiree. I first learned about kratom online as I was searching for a legal alternative for chronic arthritis pain. My MD wouldn't prescribe the narcotic Vicodin even though I'd taken

this medication for more than three years with no ill effect. The kratom I now use is called red vein Bali in capsule form. It doesn't make me "loopy" and has a mild stimulant effect like a good strong cup of coffee. What's more, my arthritis pain is hardly noticeable. I often go up stairs without having to hang on. With some changes in my diet I've lost about thirty pounds and while I wouldn't say kratom is an appetite suppressant it does seem to help me a little bit in that way. Like anything else it needs to be treated with respect and the potential for abuse is pretty small compared to a lot of other things.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, CA

am 50 years old and suffer with chronic Lyme disease. Before I started using kratom I wasn't able to hardly get out of bed. Kratom has given me the ability to live my life again. If it gets banned I don't know what I will do. I don't want to be on prescription drugs the rest of my life.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, VA

I am a 48 yr old female who uses Kratom for severe menstrual cramps and PMS, and occasional back and neck pain. It works better than anything else. I have been prescribed opiates and they don't work and they make you feel fuzzy. I have been using it as needed for several years, I feel no addiction to it, coffee is more addicting. It's safe and it works. Kratom makes me functional and productive on days where with the pain, I would be non-functional and miserable.

I am a 45 yr old female from NC, who has been using Kratom responsibly for several years for severe depression & anxiety. I was finally able to stop taking my antidepressants, which were causing me ill side effects. - ■■■■■ ■■■■■.

I am a 36 year old female (mother of 4 and grandmother to 1) who has been responsibly using Kratom for 2 years. I use it for fibromyalgia, anxiety, acute gastritis, IBS and immunity. I take ½ teaspoon once a day, sometimes twice if it's really necessary. I've never upped my dose and I take regular breaks (one week a month and sometimes an entire month at a time) without experiencing withdrawal symptoms. My fibro is manageable, my anxiety, most of the time is under control, my acute gastritis attacks are basically null. I used to have these very painful attacks as often as several times a week or as little as once every couple months. Six ER visits in 20 years for attacks that were so severe, I feared something was horribly wrong. I've had only one gastritis attack in the last two years. I haven't been sick with so much as a cold in the last two years. The ONLY prescription I have is for ½ mg of Ativan for an emergency panic attack, and I might take that once every 3 or 4 months. The only side effects I experience with kratom are nausea if I take kratom on an empty stomach and don't eat within an hour, and constipation if I don't drink enough water. My biggest fear without kratom is going back to the painful digestive issues, and having to rely more on prescriptions to control my anxiety. I will never take a script for my fibro. I will also go back to spending less time out and about with my husband and children as kratom has helped me to the point where I can get back into the swing of things and not worry about the pain I might be in if I do this, or the anxiety I'll have if I do that. - ■■■■■ ■■■■■ PA.

I am a 33 year old female who has been using Kratom for approximately 2 years now. I have severe, chronic back pain that 12 doctors and specialists have been unable to diagnose. Through those 12 doctors, I have been prescribed every painkiller and muscle relaxant out there. None of them worked for too long, as I developed tolerances and the doctors would not alter the Rx. That sent me into awful withdrawal episodes that could last weeks. A friend recommended Kratom as a way to deal with the withdrawals. Not only did they help with that, but it completely ridded me of the back pain all those doctors can't figure out. I honestly cannot get out of bed and be a taxpaying, working member of society without Kratom.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, MO

I am a 31-year-old graduate student, freelance writer, and psychotherapist. I've lived with chronic myofascial pain since I was 19. For the last four years, I have suffered from a severe and intractable iliopsoas spasm; when it flares up, it's so bad that I've cried myself to sleep and woken up screaming in pain. I used to be on a variety of prescription medications, none of which fully helped and nearly all of which interfered with my daily functioning. Almost five years ago, I began using kratom. Within months, I had phased out almost all prescription drugs. My pain management provider has marveled at the fact that I almost never need to take narcotic pain meds. In addition, kratom has helped me with depression and anxiety, as well as with seasonal allergies. Without kratom, I will almost certainly have to go back on prescription drugs. The quality of life that kratom has afforded me is immeasurable.

- [REDACTED], Massachusetts

I am a 41 year old mother of 4 children. I have suffered from pain for 18 years. My pain is so severe that I feel like I am getting stabbed over and over again. A pain so intense that I feel like I am dying. I have endometriosis, arthritis and chronic kidney stones. I pass a stone once a month. Two years ago I found kratom and my life has changed forever. I am now able to function, I can now work, cook, clean and care for my 10 year old that suffers from type 1 diabetes. I am no longer bedridden, I am now happy. If kratom is banned, I fear for my future. A future of pain. I can not go back to that life of pain, I just can not. My life will be ruined if the ban goes through. - [REDACTED] Colorado

I am a 28 year old female that has been taking Kratom for going on 7 years. I suffered with horrible depression after the loss of my son [REDACTED], back pain, and recently found out I have Hidradenitis Skin Disease - for which there is no cure. My pain levels were so bad some days, I was unable to get out of bed. Now that I have found and take Kratom my depression is completely gone and my pain is under control. I am a Mom of 3 children and Kratom helps me be able to do all the normal everyday things! Kratom has gave me my life back and helps make each day easier. - [REDACTED], SC

I am housebound and mostly bedbound due to illness. I am immunocompromised and battling 12 systemic infections and have CFS. Kratom gives me a quality of life. I found Kratom while desperately seeking pain control in 2014. At the time I could not walk, I was 95lbs, and had no insurance. I began taking Kratom for pain that later had me in the hospital for 6 days. Once I got into a doctor, I was prescribed hydrocodone, tramadol, flexeril, oxycodone, dicyclomine, and buspar for pain and anxiety. I took these drugs for several months but the side effects were intense. I began to have rebound pain from the opiates and had to wean off. I used kratom to get through the physical withdrawal and then dropped those other medications as well. I have been using Kratom to control my pain ever since. - [REDACTED], KS

I am a 44 year old mother and homemaker. I have been ill for most of my adult life with Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue and autoimmune like diseases with Neuropathy. Conditions that forced me to give up furthering my education after I earned a B.S. in Biology from the University of [REDACTED]. I have been on many allopathic medications. The majority of which, had such horrendous side effects that I could no longer take them. Kratom has been a Godsend. It has helped increase my energy. It helps me get out of bed everyday and enables me to exercise more than I thought possible. Kratom reduces my pain and allows me to clean my house, and take care of myself and my family. I don't want to even think what my life will be like if Kratom is made a Schedule 1 drug. I had been on opiates for 5 years, when all the doctors began to stop filling prescriptions and pharmacies began to deny prescriptions. It is terrifying to be dependent on a medication that may be denied to you at any time for any reason. It is also terrifying to have to use medications that may cause your premature death. I was forced to quit working due to my pain and then I found Kratom. If it is taken away, I will have nowhere to turn. The frequently prescribed antidepressants given for my diagnosis have always given me side effects worse than my disease. I will

not return to Western Medicine as it has not been a good fit for me. My pain is so great that at times I wonder how I am still alive. If Kratom is made illegal I will be relegated to a hellish life of constant severe chronic pain. This herbal has given me my life and hope back. Please do not take it away
- [REDACTED] WY

I am a 34 year old father and husband and have suffered from severe food allergies. When I turned 28, I quickly discovered something was wrong as I was getting awful gastrointestinal distress, including diarrhea, gas and bloating when eating certain foods. I could not eat many of the major foods most people take for granted today, including dairy, gluten, beef, nuts, chocolate and bananas. I tried everything to cure my distress; from enzymes, to probiotics, to prescription medication as well as other natural remedies. Nothing worked. I spoke with multiple medical professionals, including a Naturopathic Doctor, nutritionists and dieticians. Nothing worked. My distress would become miserable and debilitating, and any little bit of dairy or wheat could set off my stomach. Many days I was spent bent over and curled up in the fetal position due to extreme gas and bloating. Many hours I spent suffering on the toilet with no relief. I could not live a normal life. The proteins my body was sensitive to, were in almost everything. My quality of life had been severely degraded. So I began to scour the internet and do my own research to look for something that could relieve the issues I suffered from. After some time researching, I stumbled up Kratom. People with colitis and other intestinal diseases said that Kratom took the edge off, both pain wise, and intestinally. So I gave it a shot. From the moment I started using Kratom, I was able to eat whatever I wanted with almost no ill-effect. I have been taking Kratom successfully for 3 years. I do not know what I would do if Kratom became illegal and I was unable to use it. I know my quality of life would degrade severely. I know I would have to go back to reading every single ingredient in everything I bought. I know I would not be able to eat nearly anything that is served at a restaurant. My job and career depend on me taking customers to lunch or dinner at restaurants. This would be a severe hit to me and my family as our food bill would increase due to having to use substitutes. I hope the DEA or other government entity would reconsider making Kratom Schedule 1 or my life and my families life will forever change for the worse. - [REDACTED]

I am a 27-year-old honors student, single mother, and community volunteer. I suffer with Ankylosing spondylitis, fibromyalgia, and PTSD. Before I started taking kratom, I was considering dropping out of college and applying for disability assistance because I no longer could tolerate the pain and side effects of my many medications. I was becoming depressed as I could not be physically active with my daughter. I found kratom while asking other chronic illness patients for suggestions on alternative, natural supplements. Kratom helped ease the joint stiffness, muscle spasms, and panic attacks I was constantly experiencing. I completed last semester with a 4.0 GPA, won a prestigious scholarship, and felt well enough to mentor at-risk youth. I also now do yoga, participate in an honors society at school, and enjoy outdoor activities with my daughter. I have never experienced adverse side effects from kratom, and I have been able to stop taking muscle relaxers, narcotic pain medication, and antidepressants. My quality of life has drastically improved because of kratom, and there will be dire consequences if I can no longer use it as part of my health and wellness routine. [REDACTED], NC

I am a 55 year old mother of 4 and grandmother of 6. I was a legal assistant/ paralegal for years for a large law firm. In 1995 I fell and hurt my back and had back surgery. I later, in 2006 had a large deep vein thrombosis in my left leg, from my groin to my foot. I now have permanent nerve damage and neuropathy. I was on methadone through pain management for 6 years. I tried the blocks, a neuro-stimulator, physical therapies and of course the methadone. I lived my life in a constant fog, unable to care for myself or my daughter. I stopped taking methadone in 2010 and just suffered. I spent most of my time in bed, avoiding family functions because the pain was so severe. I looked into natural pain relief and found Kratom. I have been using Kratom now for about 7 months. I function and find myself able to do more things, such as buying my own groceries due to the pain relief. I am able to think clearly and enjoy my grandkids (I missed so much time with them). Kratom gave me my life back. I love my life now. The

thought of losing something natural, an herb, that is safe and effective scares me. What will my choices be then? Am I doomed to a life of severe pain, or opiates that slowly take my life away? Do I go back to just existing because it hurts too bad to live? - [REDACTED] Kentucky

I'm 35 years old. I started using kratom after many failed prescription medications and jail visits. At 18, I was prescribed oxytocin, then later Xanax, Wellbutrin, Zoloft, Methadone, Klonopin, Adderall, and Suboxone. I couldn't stay clean or keep a job. I was always relying on the state for food stamps and welfare to provide for my kids. Today I've been clean 3 years and I have a full-time job. I don't rely on the state for anything. If kratom is banned I could die or be a felon!!! Thanks [REDACTED]

When I was 17 years old my mother was shot and killed by my stepfather in the front yard of my house. I witnessed everything. I tried to kill him before he drove off to his apartment to later commit suicide. I witnessed my mother's death at an age where my brain was in need of maturing. I developed severe PTSD. My senior year of high school was mostly sleeping through classes and getting involved with the wrong crowd. Before this, I was a great student and never missed a day of school. At one point the PTSD was so bad I wouldn't come out of the bathroom after a shower due to the fact that I thought someone was waiting to kill me on the other side of the door. I would wait for hours and cry. Completely turned my family away and shut them out of my life. I ran off to college to escape everyone I knew. I turned to drugs to get away from the severe depression and anxiety from the PTSD. My life was a train wreck for about 8 years. I found Kratom and sobered up. I don't drink but once every 2 months thanks to kratom. I'm happy to say that I consider myself sober thanks to this plant. It has truly saved my life and helped me from killing myself. I finally have my life back and am happy for the first time in 9 years. I turn 27 in December, and I have a positive outlook on my life for the first time in years. I work out 5 days a week and am in the best shape of my life. To add to my wonderful life I have an amazing 3 year old son. If you want more details, feel free to message me. I am scared for my life for this ban. I CANNOT go back to my old life without a fight. I truly and honestly witnessed hell at such a young age. I would not wish this card of life on anyone, not even my worst enemies. I beg you to reconsider for my life, my son's future, and so many others lives.

- [REDACTED]

I'm 55 years old. I'm gainfully employed, a homeowner, a grandmother, a National Merit Scholar (way back in my school days). I'm the farthest thing from a drug addict, but prescription painkillers nearly made me one. I had an accident a few years ago and was very slow to heal. Before I realized it, I'd been taking the Vicodin my doctor prescribed for 4 months and I'd become entirely too fond of it. I started researching for a way to give up the painkillers but still manage the pain. I opted to try kratom and it did just what I needed it to. It got me off the pain pills and back to a healthy and productive work & social life. Kratom is now my go-to when I need pain treatment, because I don't ever want to tempt fate with prescription painkillers again. I also have a family member who prefers it to the Prozac that he'd been taking for 20+ years. Kratom provides him with anti-anxiety benefits without the unpleasant side-effects of the pills. I would hate to see a safe and natural alternative to dangerous opiates and chemical mood enhancers taken away by this ill-advised scheduling - [REDACTED]

I'm 44 years old. When I was about 22, I was diagnosed with depression, OCD and Anxiety Disorders. The doctor put me on 20 mg of Prozac and over the years has increased the dosage to 60 mg. But over the years, I realized it wasn't working well anymore, because those feelings of anxiety were coming back and I couldn't shake them off. About 4 years ago, I decided to try kratom for my mood disorders and it works so much better. I don't have to take the Prozac anymore and I don't have the undesirable side-effects from the prescription drug. I've lost close to 50 excess pounds, because I'm much more alert and active on kratom. I used to come home and sleep for 15 hours a day. Now I sleep about 6 to 8 hours, like normal people do. Not to get too personal, but the Prozac also had a negative effect on my sex drive and

my wife is much happier now that I've found a better anti-anxiety treatment. I've been taking kratom daily for over 4 years now. It doesn't get me high – it makes me feel like a normal human being again. I get things done and my judgment doesn't get clouded by anxiety and paranoia like it used to. Please do not ban kratom – I don't want to have to go back to a less effective choice with unpleasant side-effects. --

██████████, ██████████

My name is ██████████ ██████████ ██████████. I'm a 41 year old stay at home mom to a 4 year old boy. I have suffered for many years from late stage Lyme disease, which is notoriously difficult to treat. My symptoms include deep fatigue and a lot of varied pain, among many others. Kratom has been more useful to manage my pain and fatigue than any other pharmaceutical or herbal remedy I have tried. I have been taking it regularly for well over a year with no signs of building up a tolerance, or any other negative side effect apart from some occasional thirst or constipation which is easily managed. Kratom truly has become instrumental and indispensable to me being able to lead a semblance of a normal life while fighting this insidious disease. If it were banned, not only would I personally suffer, but it would also strongly impact the kind of mother I can be to my son, and wife to my husband. - ██████████ ██████████

██████████, ██████████ CA

I'm a 56 yr old wife, mother, mother of an angel (my ██████████, age 11 1/2, to CF in 2000), grandmother, and former PI (specialties: Reuniting families and assisting in the search for the missing, primarily children) who was forced to retire too soon due to; Chronic Migraine (15+/mo), Pancreatitis, IBS, Fibromyalgia and more recently, MS. I am unable to take any type of OTC or prescribed pain medications; my system simply treats them as poison and I wind up admitted to the hospital w/migraine, uncontrolled projectile vomiting and life threatening extremely low blood pressure. For the past 15 years, I have dealt with the extreme pain of my various illnesses myself, w/no meds, which caused even more health issues, extremely high blood pressure and depression amongst them.

I honestly didn't realize how much pain I was in on a daily basis, until I tried Kratom and within minutes, 80% of the pain disappeared. In addition, I was not dizzy, "high", buzzed - none of that. All I felt other than the lessening of pain, was total relief. It's been a year now and Kratom continues to be a God-send. I am not addicted to it, take when needed, and with this miracle, have begun to take up the dropped reins of my life. The migraines are not completely eased, but all other painful symptoms are, and I am now advocating for the missing again; reuniting families again. Kratom has helped hundreds of thousands of folks, with pain, and to recover from addiction. To ban this natural miracle would cause us all including myself, to return to a dark life full of pain. I cannot even imagine how that will be possible, to return to my housebound, bedridden pain-filled self. I just can't. I just cannot comprehend how we're expected to do that. How are we to explain to our families and children who are so thrilled to have the old "us" back? How? - Kind Regards, ██████████ ██████████, ██████████ ██████████, MO

I am a fifty-six year old woman who has been partially disabled and in pain for most of my life, due to scoliosis and lordosis, two kinds of spinal curvature. I now also suffer from debilitating arthritis, fibromyalgia, sciatica, migraine and pain-related sleep disorder. The herb kratom helps enormously with all of these conditions. Pharmaceutical medications do not address these illnesses sufficiently. Without the herb kratom I would be mostly immobile, unable to do the limited work I can now do. I wouldn't be able to contribute to our local economy as I do now. I might not be able to live independently, as I do now. The pharmaceutical medications that I'd likely be prescribed are very addictive and also very harmful to the body. This is widely documented. Forced to rely only on prescription medication, I would be dealing with issues associated with those medications on top of my illnesses, resulting in decreased well being overall. Because of a lack of independence and decreased well being and health, I would likely suffer depression, necessitating treatment for that issue also. Pharmaceutical treatments for depression have their own very serious risks, also widely documented. Basically, I see a future of needless suffering & a downward spiral if the herb kratom is banned. I have been using kratom for two years. The sense that I

have the power to determine my own health is extremely important to my well being also. ~ [REDACTED], N.Y.

I'm a 32 year old responsible woman who is also a single mother to two little boys. I have a B.A. In Psychology and am a domestic abuse survivor. I've been using Kratom responsibly for the past 6-9 months as a supplement to my Dr. Prescribed medications for Narcolepsy... I was diagnosed in May 2015. I have depended on stimulant medication prescribed by my doctor (in doses well above the FDA recommendations) for the better part of 6 years now. I have also depended on anxiety medications (benzos) to combat the anxiety that the stimulants were giving me. I have tried every single stimulant on the market and almost every single antidepressant on the market. The stimulants came with a lot of side effects and I hated how up and down they make you feel. Nothing was ever consistent and I was always tired. It was a disaster. The pharmaceutical drugs helped minimally but did not get me anywhere near being a functional member of society (let alone a mommy). I haven't been able to work for the past 2 years thanks to my condition. My ex husband's child support, food stamps and parents have been my only source of income for quite a while now. When I started looking into Kratom I was at a point physically where I didn't think pharmaceuticals could help me much more, so I needed another option. Narcolepsy can quite literally destroy your life and body, and at my worst I was sleeping 18-20 hours a day... I could not accept that as my reality because of my two children. I did all my research and decided to give Kratom a try- crossing my fingers it would help me.

Kratom in low amounts is stimulating and so I found that just a very small amount (1-2 teaspoons) a few times a day helped me tremendously. Not only did it decrease my extreme daytime fatigue, it almost completely eliminated my anxiety. When I first started using Kratom I had no idea just how much it would change my life- not only was I able to stop taking Anxiety medications (benzos) I was also able to stop taking stimulants. 1 teaspoon of Kratom three times a day did more for me than 120mg of Adderall and 3mg of Ativan. I am feeling better than I have in a really long time and Kratom is a really big part of the reason why. My health is completely consistent and because of that, life is so much easier. I've been thinking about getting a part time job in the next 2-3 months. I will not be able to do that if Kratom becomes a schedule 1. Honestly, I fear for what my life will go back to if I am no longer able to use Kratom. I love being healthy and I'm going to be honest- I'm very upset that this is happening. What did I do to deserve this? I'm just a single mother trying to raise my babies in my small town, and I got a stupid thing called Narcolepsy. I fought like hell to get better and to where I am now, life without Kratom will be terrible.

My life with no Kratom will be one I never thought I would have to go back to. When I have gone 30 days without it, I will be back to relying on just prescription medications to manage the symptoms of Narcolepsy. Adderall and Ativan, because there is nothing more helpful than Adderall and with that comes a lot of anxiety as a side effect. I will be ok one day and not the next, and when I say not ok I mean I'm literally not able to wake up and function outside of my bed. Within a month I will become tolerant to the Adderall and will have zero good days anymore. I will most likely have to get in touch with my doctor and have her switch me to a different stimulant in the hopes that it works. It won't, I've been through this cycle many times. I will have no option but to deal with the fatigue and will not be able to look for part time work like I was anticipating doing in the next few months.

This ban will not only impact me, it will impact my children as well. They have long forgotten the Mommy who was always too tired to play with them, cook for them and enjoy life with them. I will lose so much more than just energy as I will not be able to spend nearly as much time with them due to sleeping all day. They deserve to have me at my best to take them to school, cook healthy meals for them, teach them how to play soccer- all things I can do now, but will not be able to do after September 30. It breaks my heart for them, for me, and for everyone else who will be affected by this scheduling. It is unnecessary and not fair- and I hope the people responsible for this know how much they are hurting people like me- you're hurting my children too.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a mother of 4 children. I work in the medical field in a high up position. I am involved in my kids school and after school activities. I run a non-profit group for kids with cancer. I have never been an alcoholic or misused drugs. I googled something natural for anxiety and came across this plant. All those things listed above, I wasn't able to do for a few years due to horrible anxiety. I wasn't able to handle the social interaction. I could barely make a phone call. Now I am back out in the world. My anxiety is under control for the first time in years and I am afraid of going backwards. This plant has changed my life for the better.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 42 yr old chronic pain patient. Before I found Kratom I had become totally bedridden and dependent on prescription pain meds. After suffering horrible withdrawals, I vowed never to go back to pills but the pain was too much for me to handle. I eventually attempted suicide to end the unbearable physical pain. When I was released from the psych ward, I started looking for a natural way to relieve my pain and heard about kratom. Kratom has given me my life back. I am no longer bedridden. I can enjoy playing with my son and granddaughter. I no longer want to die but I am frightened. I am afraid that if kratom is taken from me, I will not be strong enough. I am worried that it will push me back to the pills or even worse. I cannot handle going through withdrawal again. I JUST CAN'T. If I do not go back to those horrible pills, I fear that I may once again become suicidal. And next time I may not be so lucky. I am literally afraid for my life.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I have suffered from endometriosis since I was 14 years old. Endometriosis is a chronic, incurable condition that causes intense pain on an intermittent basis. When I was 21, I underwent surgery to remove the endometrial adhesions, but the adhesions quickly returned, which is extremely common. I tried a variety of medications to manage the condition, including NSAIDs, but by the time I was 25, my doctor told me that my only remaining options were to take opioid painkillers or undergo a hysterectomy. Everything changed when I learned about kratom. Kratom helps to ease the endometriosis "flare-ups" without the use of opiate painkillers. I have been using Kratom for several years with no ill effects. It has helped me tremendously with my symptoms, allowing me to be an engaged wife, mother, and contributing member of my community. My health has never been better. Without kratom, I will be forced to use opiate pain medications or undergo a hysterectomy at the age of 34. I am hoping for an opportunity to have a second child, and I am not exaggerating at all when I say that kratom is what is preserving my fertility. -- [REDACTED] [REDACTED], Age 34, [REDACTED], WA

I am a 32 year old stay at home parent. I take care of my one year old and I am fostering my seven year old nephew who has complex medical conditions. I have been taking Kratom for over 6 months for my fibromyalgia, back pain and endometriosis. I was able to get off my prescribed narcotic medication thanks to Kratom. Kratom helps manage my daily pain, mood and gives me energy that I have been lacking for years. Kratom makes me feel normal, unlike the narcotics that made me feel like a zombie. I can only hope that this plant stays legal, so I can continue giving 110% to my family and live a drug free and clear headed life.

I am a 38-year-old single mother of two with fibromyalgia and kratom has been a GODSEND in my life. Kratom makes me feel well and energetic again. It relieves my pain and gives a boost to my mood. My children need me and I am scared to death that the ban will leave me exhausted, in pain and unable to work or care for them.

I'm a 34 year old Ohio native and I used kratom to get off of heroin. Full stop. No suboxone, no methadone, just plain leaf Kratom and a bed. I found that it also helped with my anxiety, so I asked my doctor to taper me off of Klonopin. Kratom is also a wonderful antidepressant and I've asked my doctor to lower my dose of Effexor. She was doubtful and didn't want to do it, but she did, and I'm in better shape than ever. Once this scheduling happens, I honestly don't know what's going to happen to me.

I am 57 and have been nearly bedridden for 12 years due to a wreck that has left me with a severe case of occipital neuralgia. Nothing, including narcotics, has given me any consistent relief until now. I just found Kratom about 6 weeks ago and the difference has been amazing with no side effects. Please don't take away the life I have just been able to start living again. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Oklahoma.

I'm a 42 year old female with several health problems which cause chronic pain. Kratom has by far exceeded previous contemporary treatments and medications. Before this DEA intent was filed, I believed that with the help of kratom I would quite possibly be able to work again. Now my life is on hold again. I'm terrified of the possibility that I may not only lose 'my miracle', but that should I need to go back into pain management, I may not even have access to my previous medicines due to the sweeping changes made in the few months since I voluntarily left. What particular type of evil is in play when one is persecuted for trying to make healthier, safer, more responsible choices? I'm at a loss to understand this. - [REDACTED] ID

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm a 41 year old woman who lives with CRPS, the most painful disease known to man, Multiple Sclerosis, and Fibromyalgia. For 16+ years I've dealt with debilitating chronic pain, depression, and anxiety as a result. I've tried almost every therapy and medication offered to me over the years, with very little positive effects. The pain was very poorly controlled and the depression had me in a place emotionally, that I was suicidal. I saw myself as nothing but a burden to the people around me and the world as a whole. I heard about Kratom in a social media group for chronic pain. I researched, and with the blessing of my doctors, who all felt it was a safer alternative to the opiates and narcotics I'd been reliant on to that point, I gave it a chance. 11 months later I have found some pain relief and find that it's enough to allow me to be an active participant in the world around me, as opposed to a sobbing lump on the sofa or in bed. I am able to do basic household chores again, and to get out into the world for short periods. Things that weren't possible before kratom. I literally fear for my life without the help of this herb. - [REDACTED]

I'm a college student studying computer science and I've long been a musician, which has kept my hands and arms extremely busy for most of my waking hours. During my senior year of high school I started to notice pain creeping up in my arms and this grew to be debilitating. I was made to choose between completing my school work or practicing my french horn enough to be ready for my weekly lesson (I attended an arts school so much playing was demanded of me). I took measures to reduce performance anxiety so I wouldn't be squeezing the instrument unnecessarily intensely which helped a bit, but the pain didn't cease entirely. Going to a doctor was unattractive to me as I don't trust myself to handle messing with opioid medications, and turning to NSAIDs actually ended up giving me a stomach ulcer after using ibuprofen daily for a long time period. Finally during my freshman year of college I was introduced to kratom at a local kava bar and found that it helped immensely with my symptoms. Ever since, I've used it on days when my arms are in high demand and I no longer had to worry about putting myself in immense pain just to maintain basic function in my life. I've never been anywhere close to addicted to kratom, and from what I understand it has many pharmacological targets not shared with traditional opioids that may mediate its more mild dependence liability (antiglutamatergic activity, specifically, unless I'm not remembering correctly). So now with the DEA's knee-jerk banning of kratom, the only two medicinal herbs

I know of that helped me with my symptoms are deemed to have "no accepted medical use" and attempting to use them will deem me a serious criminal to polite society.

I am [REDACTED] [REDACTED] age 44. I took Kratom to get away from Opiates. Kratom helped address the four things that always made me relapse; depression, anxiety, fatigue and pain. Kratom brought me back from the brink. I would likely have overdosed, died or been thrown in jail if not for kratom. I know that I am not the only one for which this is true. If kratom is taken away, I can't say what would happen. I would lose my drive to live and be a better person. I will be sorely tempted every day to give in and give up. God knows what will happen. I can only hope that the DEA or congress will see how kratom has saved my life and not make me a criminal. This is all too real. This is my life. I don't want to be a criminal, relapse or die. Please don't take away what allowed me to be a productive member of society after I just got my life back in order. Please don't do this to so many people. We want to live normal lives within just laws of society. This ban is a grave and a destructive tragedy.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], 44, father of one, and I am a disabled professional with 15 years of print production experience for large fortune 500 companies. I got injured in 1990 and was in a car accident in 2011 that brought my previous injury to the breaking point. After 2 major back surgeries and the loss of my job, I am waiting for my Social Security hearing (29 months to date) and have no health insurance. I have been taking Kratom for pain (about 2 years), and have no way to get any other medicines. Kratom helps me to feel a little better, and if the DEA pushes this ban through, I will lose access to the only pain control I have. If this ban goes through, I am horrified at the pain I will again feel. Kratom allows me to move around the house and to do simple things in my everyday life, that others take for granted. Kratom allows me a little relief I cannot get elsewhere. Thank you - [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am a 54 year old female. 20 plus years ago I was in an auto accident. I had a lot of soft tissue damage. Since the accident I have been diagnosed with more than 20 diagnoses. Everything from Fibromyalgia to occipital neuralgia. My life became one of pain at the moment of impact. I was told for the first 6 months I would get better, but I didn't, I got worse. I am intolerant to most (almost all) pain medications. I made a number of attempts to take them but they just made me too sick. I then tried every therapy possible. I started getting trigger point injections and cervical epidural injections, but they just never did anything positive for me (although I went in for dozens of these out of desperation). I even considered having my nerves burned until I was told the risks and the possibility that the pain would get a whole lot worse before it MIGHT get better (and the fact that the nerves could come back so to speak). In the last 2 years I have had to have 4 surgeries, 2 on my right knee and one on each shoulder. I made it exactly one day for 3 of the surgeries on pain meds before I switched to Kratom. (The last surgery, I was on pain meds a lot longer than I thought I would be due to surgery failure. I questioned the entire time if the vomiting induced by the medications was worth it and decided no, and switched back to Kratom 2 weeks later. The pain from the last surgery continues to this day but I only use Kratom for it). I simply cannot tolerate opiates or even the synthetics (Tramadol). Kratom has given me my life back better than anything else ever could. I still have days that are not so good, but I am no longer lying there waiting impatiently for death. Now I find myself living in fear (and my family has fears as well) that come the end of September I will have to stop the Kratom due to DEA's decision. I feel like I have 11 days at the time of this writing for relief and then I am not sure what is going to happen. KRATOM SAVES LIVES! Please save so many of us from a possible horrendous fate and keep this plant legal and accessible.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Massachusetts. I am 46 years old. I lost my daughter, [REDACTED], to this opioid epidemic, over one year ago. She got addicted to oxycontin that was flooding the streets before anyone was knowledgeable of the dangers. I never had a chance to warn her. She battled until

she was 28. If I knew then what I know now about kratom, I'm confident she would still be here. I now use kratom for the emotional pain I will have for the rest of my life. I have been using kratom for about 9 months. I use it all day long. It gets me through each day without feeling so lost. I get no side effects, and I use a lot. I'm distraught at the thought of not having this wonderful, god-given plant for my pain.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 37 years old, I work as a customer service manager, I am a mother of four, a wife, a daughter, and soon to be grandmother. Two years ago I was on the verge of losing my job due to poor attendance because of the pain and fatigue associated with ehlers-danlos syndrome, fibromyalgia, and neuropathy. The pain would keep me in bed for days unable to function. I joined a couple facebook support groups, because i was to the point that I prayed to go to sleep and not wake up. Someone had shared an article on kratom, so I did a lot of research and listened to a lot of testimony. I decided to try it, because i had already tried everything else. Two years later, I am back to working full time, and am no longer at any risk of losing my job. I carry my own medical insurance, and pay my own medical bills. My quality of life has improved to where I enjoy waking up and facing each new day. To take away something mild without side effects is inhumane. We are adults who have a right to choose what we put into our bodies. My frame of mind greatly improved after tapering off of the prescriptions that had such harsh side effects. How is this a bad thing? If they make kratom a schedule 1, it will confirm my belief that the government doesn't care about the people anymore, that all they care about is money. Let us live our lives in peace, in the land of the free that America was supposed to stand for.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 34 year old Innovation and Experience Designer specializing in the research and development of natural gestures for human-computer interfaces in cognitive systems engineering. I have been sick for 25 years with invisible illnesses and autoimmune conditions. So somehow I've managed to grow up with crippling symptoms and yet manage to succeed. But lately my symptoms have degenerated to the point of disability. On good days, I can shuffle-walk. I can barely sit up and have a conversation. I can chew. On bad days, my eyes swell shut, my fever confines me to lying down, I'm nauseated and have no strength to walk or sit up, and intense burning neuropathy pours like hot lava throughout my back. Many people with invisible illnesses suffer in silence. Our doctors call us liars; they say it's "something the mind makes up to get attention"; they tell us our problems are weight-gain/loss related while refusing to believe that the weight issues are the result—not the cause—of our pain and fatigue. I was a child the first time a specialist, I had traveled 3 hours to see, told me to "stop making up the symptoms." I was a preteen struggling to breathe when a pain specialist accused me of coming to him "just for narcotics." Very recently, I finally discovered the source for all my autoimmune responses—Lyme Disease and co-infections. These bacterial infections have burrowed deep into my joints, my organs, my bone tissue, even my brain—into crevices where white blood cells have no access, far beyond the reach of antibiotics, even where palliative pain medications give me no comfort. Like all late-stage autoimmune Lyme patients, the treatments I undergo are experimental, cutting edge, involving new medical technology at the forefront of a poorly understood disease. I travel far to seek treatments. And in order to do so, I require at least some relief from symptoms to give me the sleep and the energy I need to do what is necessary for my treatments. I have never taken narcotics in my life; I have never taken nor been addicted to opiates. Yet I take Kratom because it gives me long lasting pain relief from symptoms that are otherwise entirely crippling, without the nauseating and dizzying side effects I get from prescription pain drugs. I have never felt it to have any addictive hold over me; when I don't need it, I don't need it and that is a surprising and wonderful feeling. But when I do, I most certainly do. It is not a cure; but it is the only thing that allows me to get to my doctor appointments, to sleep without painful tremors, to meet with Lyme specialists, and to aid me in my journey for a cure. If you take away this means for pain relief, you are making it impossible for me to seek the care and treatments I need. If you seek to regulate it, then do so without scheduling it in the same category as heroin, and do it in a way that lets those of us in legitimate pain access it as the tool that it is, a medicine.

I am a 50yr old mother and grandma that suffers from chronic pain. Diagnosed with several ailments, my lower back is what puts me down on a daily basis. The pain takes away my sleep and has me tossing and turning most nights which led to depression. It was awful until I found kratom 3+ years ago. My daughters introduced me to this natural plant that has since changed my life. I can sleep. I can move around more easily. I laugh and smile again. What was once a bitter woman that people hated to be around, because I was miserable, has turned into a friendly, happy, caring, loving person that has become a great mother and grandmother. Kratom has gave me life back. I use it daily to help reduce pain and lift my mood.

I feel if kratom is banned, it will send me back into the doctor's office trying to get painkillers. I feel like my life as I know it, will change back to where I once was. Depressed, in pain, miserable, sleepless and hopeless. I don't want to become a criminal for using a plant that is illegal. I need kratom in my life daily. I've tried other plants and most medicines made today, and none of them work for me. I love that kratom gave me a freedom of choice. I don't have doctors degrading me, thinking it's all about the drugs when it wasn't. It was, and always has been about the pain relief. Kratom helps with that. It's given me so much more than I ever thought possible. My dignity, self esteem, worth, happiness, joy, family, friends, all came back to me. Please don't take it away.

I am a 44 year old mother of a college student. I work in the corporate world and am a Vice President of Sales for a successful software company, have a successful career, and I am college educated. I pay my taxes. I have never been arrested. I have never even had a speeding ticket. I don't drink much and I don't do recreational drugs. I grew up with parents who did believe that conventional medicine is a last resort to use only when natural medicine has failed or is not helpful enough. We drank a lot of yucky herbs and learned to take horse pill sized vitamins at a very young age.

About 7 years ago I was in an auto accident, where I suffered two herniated discs and several torn muscles. Since then, additional discs have herniated at random due to gravity. One of the discs is literally pressing 20% into my spinal cord. Doctors and Chiropractors alike recommend surgery (I don't trust the neck surgeries, as I have seen too many failed). The last Osteopath (about a year and a half ago) I saw couldn't believe I was even functioning and immediately prescribed me a bottle of Percocet. I still have them, and hold them for emergencies. He said that if I didn't want surgery now, that he would gladly send me to pain management. My regular doctor will prescribe Vicodin if I ask, because my pain and ailment is quite well documented. The drugs are not hard to get when you have proof of pain like mine. Here are two pictures that are MRI's of MY NECK:



The 2nd picture is a top down view. The white spot in the middle is my spinal cord. The dark part protruding into it is my disc, stuck into my spinal cord. This is what pain looks like on film. What it feels

like is a constant pinch in my neck, that runs down to my upper trapezius and down the back of my shoulder. At times when inflammation is present, the pain can go all the way down my arm and even make me lose all feeling, except for pain and numbness in my fingertips. My right hand has permanent weakness, and this is documented by both doctors and chiropractors. This injury means that I can't open a jar or do anything that requires hand strength. Besides a college degree, I also have a massage therapy license. I do not practice any longer because I am not able.

I do have chronic pain. I do have in my possession, Percocet. The same bottle the Osteopath prescribed over a year ago. In the past year, I have taken 3 of them. The year the accident occurred, I spent about two weeks taking full doses of Vicodin every day. I started to feel a craving for them as they exited my system. I knew about Kratom, but had only tried it once. Someone suggested I try it for pain. To my surprise, it worked and that's why I don't use the Percocet.

I drink one or two cups of Kratom tea daily (most days). I have been for several years. Sometimes I travel for work and don't have it for several days. It does not bother me. I don't seem to have any form of withdrawal. I make the tea at home from leaf purchased on the internet. I drink it in the afternoon, when sitting in the chair at my desk has started to wear on my neck and shoulders. It enables me to keep working with a clear mind and reduces my pain. If I am still in pain at the end of the day, I have a second cup. Never has my boss or coworkers asked if I am messed up, on drugs or thought I was not ok. I function completely normally with Kratom. The pain is reduced enough that I can continue working and remain productive. I can even do gentle yoga a few times a week. Without it, I would need to resort to the Percocets that I keep in my purse for fear of having a bad pain episode. I don't know what I would do if the Kratom ban goes through. Live in pain? Live with a foggy mind and end up losing my job due to real drugs and what they call "pain management?" Those are the only options available, neither of which I want.

I have annual check ups from my doctor. All of my blood work is normal, everything shows that I am a healthy individual. If you want to see copies, I will send them to you. Kratom has not harmed my organs, my cholesterol is perfect, my vitamin levels are also perfect. All is well! Please don't take it away! I'm so scared to have to make a choice between constant pain and losing my mind on hard, dangerous Opioid drugs. If Kratom is banned, will the DEA compensate me in salary, since the ban may cost me my job? Sincerely, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] FL

I am a 42 year old mother of 2 suffering from bulging and torn disc at L4 and L5. I suffer from chronic pain daily as a result. I spent 7 years allowing a doctor to prescribe me opiates as the answer. My breaking point was when I came down with the flu and couldn't keep anything down including my meds. Sadly my body had become addicted to the medication and I was hospitalized as a result of the withdrawal. That was my breaking point in deciding I would not allow my body to be controlled by a pharmaceutical. I found Kratom and it provided more relief than I ever had taking the morphine. I no longer have to worry about being addicted to a medication and I can once again function and participate with my family. Taking Kratom away will leave me no choice but to return to pharmaceuticals to ease my pain. This world has enough of an opiate problem without adding me as another victim to that number.

About two years ago I was going through a very difficult period in my life. My wife and I had separated, and not long after, the resulting depression that set in started to take a toll on my work and my personal life. My doctor put me on antidepressants. Within a few weeks things got better. My wife returned and my work and personal life improved. About a year later though, something happened. The medications stopped working. Literally just STOPPED. It was like a light switch had been turned off. My doctor and I tried different dosages and medications but none of them worked. However, because of the dosage changes, my body and mind started going through withdrawal symptoms. I don't know if you've ever experienced these symptoms, but I pray you haven't and that you NEVER have to go through them. One of the symptoms can only be described as a "brain zap". It's literally the feeling of an electric current

going through your head. Every few seconds...zap...zap...zap. Couple that with migraines, inability to sleep, and mood swings like you wouldn't believe. There was only one drug that mitigated the symptoms. I found that Tramadol stopped the brain zaps which allowed me to sleep which allowed me to regain my strength and keep everything under control. Then the FDA/DEA reclassified Tramadol. My doctor couldn't prescribe it to me. I started to spiral down again, but then a miracle happened. A friend of mine suggested I try an herbal remedy called Kratom. I did some quick research and decided to go for it. I was looking for any relief. My order arrived a few days later from a company in Austin. I can't adequately put into words what happened other than to say it was a GOD SEND. A TRUE MIRACLE FROM HEAVEN. I found relief within 20 minutes. In fact, not ONLY did the brain zaps stop, but over the next few days and weeks, I found it had an analgesic effect on my back and provided me with an energy boost.

I have been using kratom now for a little over a year and it's helped me get my life back. I'm no longer on antidepressants or any kind of pain medication for my back. I have energy again and I no longer have the mood swings that plagued me for so long.

Please help me and countless others. - [REDACTED], TX

I am a 51 year old male from [REDACTED] Florida. I was prescribed narcotic pain medication in 2001 for degenerative spine injuries from working full-time as a plumber since 1980. Two of my lower disc in my spine are squished out from the front of my spine and they are in-operable. I currently still work 70 hours a week. Narcotic pain medication which consists of an opiate, worked for the first few months of the 15 years. It started off with a simple prescription. A decade later I was on the strongest dose allowable, taking a synthetic opiate called Methadone eight times a day the highest milligram tablet. With this narcotic pain medication, I had to get prescription opiates of different types for breakthrough pain. Those prescriptions lead to asthma and I needed prescriptions for that. All of the above led to prescriptions for depression. At the end of the decade I was taking six prescriptions costing \$800 a month. My health was so poor I was only working 10 hours a week. On the verge of losing my business and all I owned, my son introduced me to KRATOM. Within months I stopped taking all of the prescriptions and within two days I was not taking Methadone and only KRATOM tea. Five years later I only make a cup of tea for my chronic pain. This plant which is in the coffee family has no tolerance build up and no dependency. I cannot go back to taking pharmaceutical opiates or any synthesized drug. Today I am free from side effects from the prescriptions I used to take, and I feel like I am 19 years old again, back to working 70 hours. If you ban this plant which you do not have any constitutional right to do so according to the 9th and 10th amendment you will see tens of thousands of people die from drug overdose and suicides and crime to pay for prescriptions they can't afford. No one has ever died from taking KRATOM! You already know this. Stop working for big Pharma. The research you did to get this ban, you surely realized that Kratom is the only remedy for many illnesses and had no side effects. Do the right thing and lift the ban because thirty days after its banned, those who had to stop using pharmaceutical prescriptions, which is everybody who's using this plant, will get very active and boisterous about government corruption and relationships that should not exist between bureaucrats and corporations. We don't need anymore problems with trust in government and we don't need any of nature's plants banned. You don't have the right or the authority to ban a plant!

I am a 56 year old grandma raising 2 grandchildren. 13 years ago I was struck head on by a drunk driver. Prior to that I was a hospital technician and on my way to finally getting my RN license. Since that day I have been a chronic pain sufferer. 13 surgeries, hip replacement, MRSA, 2 ankle replacements still pending, fibromyalgia, and hypothyroidism. I have been on pain meds with all their nasty side effects since. The pain doesn't go away. My doc's answer is to prescribe more. Prescribe stronger meds. More side effects, less living. I found Kratom through a website for fibro pain sufferers, did some research and very hesitantly ordered some. Luckily I found a wonderful vender and to my surprise Kratom worked. It

helped with my pain, depression, and anxiety. Because believe me when you are a chronic pain sufferer, depression and anxiety are both part of it! Kratom does not take away all of my pain.but makes it livable.It improves my attitude and makes me look forward to life again. There is no high from Kratom. If there was, I would not use it. I have used it for months and then stopped with no problems.This plant has helped so many. Regulate, please do not ban. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Arkansas

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and I am a 41 year old woman with mild cerebral palsy (from brain injury at birth), and an autoimmune disorder which is on the Lupus spectrum. I am married, work in construction management and am a professional musician and photographer. Kratom helps me manage my chronic pain and fatigue symptoms. Before Kratom, I took a number of painkillers and muscle relaxants, but they left me very groggy and dizzy. I also developed gastritis from the overuse of painkillers, so I had to stop. It was difficult to be fully functional at work, at home and socially. I felt as though I was in too much pain to be engaged with the world. I became increasingly depressed and withdrawn. But fortunately, a friend introduced me to Kratom. It is a supplement that eased my chronic pain and fatigue to a level where I can now be more active and involved. It has made a tremendous difference in my life. I recently started going to the gym to make my body even stronger now that the pain has been lifted enough for me to do physical activity. I have increased my work hours and my outlook on life has brightened. I am much happier and healthier overall. Please do not ban this supplement that allows me, and so many people like me, to function in a fuller, more productive way. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], FL

My name is [REDACTED] and I have been using kratom for four years now for a lot of reasons. Ptsd ,bipolar depression,restless limb,and back pain. This plant has helped so many people for so many different reasons. I was able to stop taking a few of my prescription meds when i started taking kratom. I still take a few but not as many. People addicted to heroin and various pain meds are able to use this harmless plant to get free of their addiction. Thousands and thousands of lives will be negatively affected by this ban.

I am a 42 year old man with a wife and 2 sons. I have a bachelor's degree and work as a network engineer. I'm a musician and artist. In 2002 I was suffering with chronic back pain. It was so bad that I couldn't exercise and it affected my work life where I spent large parts of my day sitting. I gained 60lbs and was eventually diagnosed with a degenerative disc disease and sent to a spine specialist. They gave me narcotic pain killers. A LOT of them. They helped the pain but made me groggy, drowsy, constipated, etc. I was never an addict but I was headed that way when I found kratom. After starting kratom I was off of all narcotic pain killers. I was able to get back to soccer and lost 70 lbs. I started coaching soccer for my kids and volunteering to help kids w special needs play soccer. I wasn't groggy or drowsy at work and in the 5 years I've been using kratom, I've had no side-effects. Stopping it suddenly will cause me some fatigue and an upset stomach. Hardly anything compared to stopping narcotics. If this ban goes through I will be faced with either suffering in pain daily or going back to doctors who are reluctant and judgemental about prescribing narcotic painkillers. I have a lot to lose if kratom is made illegal. Taking narcotic painkillers makes you feel euphoric. Taking more than you should gets you high. Kratom does not make a person high.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 34 year old married women and a mom of two little boys. I have an MBA degree but I currently have decided to stay at home with my kids. I am also a person who has greatly struggled with depression and anxiety, and chronic debilitating tmj pain. Those issues resulted in me drinking a lot, and I became a very dangerous alcoholic. According to the doctor back then I was ruining my liver, I was also ruining my life. I could not hold relationships and felt totally isolated. Thank God I quit drinking before I had the kids. Alcohol is truly the most dangerous drug out there, legal or not. It kills more than the opiate epidemic does each year. The fact that I can walk right next door to get deadly alcohol makes me scared, If they succeed in banning Kratom. Kratom has helped me remain sober for almost six years now. It helps greatly with my depression and anxiety so that I was happy

again and could form relationships and got married. It also helps tremendously with my severe tmj. I was supposed to have surgery over 20 years ago but my dad didn't want to pay for it, so now my teeth don't fit together and my jaw hurts so bad I don't like to talk or eat. Kratom has also helped me greatly with that pain. I can now live my life in less emotional and physical pain. It is also imperative that I stay off alcohol, because it will probably kill me if I drank again. I am a great wife and mom now. I am a productive member of society, and I even work out everyday. Kratom greatly helps my quality of life in many ways. If it is taken away from me all the problems stated above will come back to me because I definitely can not go back on those pharmaceuticals that were dangerous and put me in a fog. I have family that needs me so this ban will affect them negatively as well.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 39-year-old mother and computer science student. This wonderful leaf has helped me greatly. I sometimes have small amounts in a tea and it really helps with my treatment-resistant depression and anxiety as well as pain. I have a history of extreme trauma and have developed PTSD from many negative life experiences such as severe peer bullying, child abuse, the murder of my father and other unfortunate events. I've tried many pharmaceuticals since I was a teen, and I developed a terrible alcohol problem while trying to get some relief from my unbearable feelings of sadness and fear. Thanks to Kratom, I am 18 months sober from alcohol. Kratom helps not only my physical pain, but my mental pain, and the lack of motivation that causes a cycle of more depression and immobility. I can't go back to that life. It is not living at all. I want to be a productive member of society, I want to be a good mother, and I want to be law-abiding. Please do not make me a criminal. I am not a bad person, I am not looking to get high, I am just in pain.

I am a 27 year old male student who has been in the workforce since I was 15. I have no arrests, traffic tickets, or criminal history whatsoever in my life including as a juvenile. I was a 4.0 student and member of my high school Key Club where I logged 100+ hours volunteering. I have been employed full time in the construction industry, as a retail sales manager, and as a solar installer. I own multiple houses and have clear titles on all of them. I am self taught in two foreign languages which I speak with high degrees of fluency. I aspire to continue my college education and ultimately work in the healthcare industry as an ARNP or MD.

I am a diagnosed bipolar with an anxiety disorder. I use kratom as a supplement for my depressive symptoms and anxiety as a substitute for prescribed drugs such as xanax, valproate, valium, and lamictal. If this ban takes place I will be faced with a barrage of prescription medications with a myriad of potentially dangerous side effects to manage my condition. The prescription medications I will be required to take are highly addictive and also make me feel 'high' which causes me issues with concentration, work performance, and academic pursuits. With access to kratom, I brew a tea which I drink twice daily and have no issues or need for prescription medications and their side effects. - [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Florida

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm 52 years old. I've been a chronic pain sufferer since the first car accident in 2004. My first pain relief was hydrocodone. I was also injured in a 2nd car accident in 2007 one year after the spinal fusion to repair the damage from the first. I was also physically assaulted in 2009 which threw all the rehabilitation out the window and began my journey in Dilaudid, Morphine and Percocets. I've never abused these drugs but was treated as such. The medical community began pulling the rug and tapering me very quickly due to the heroin overdose epidemic. I was led to Kratom which as been a God send. If the DEA take this away the ONLY choice will be suicide as I've decided I will not live the rest of my life in agony. - [REDACTED]. Rochester, NY

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am a mother of three, with an undergrad degree in Finance and Masters in Education. I have used kratom tea over the past year, after searching for herbal remedies for

my mild anxiety. I also run half marathons, and running has proved to be an outlet for stress relief as well. Kratom tea has also helped manage pain with injuries that I have sustained from running, including five knee surgeries to date. I also use other herbal supplements and plants to treat ailments. I feel as though the Government, in particular the DEA, is taking away my rights to live a healthy and happy life. Why do they get to choose what I put in my body if it is causing no harm to others or myself? I feel healthier and happier than I did a year ago. I have never felt "addicted" to this plant or felt as though it was dangerous in any way. I will continue to fight for this freedom, for myself and others, and because I want my children to learn that you fight for what is right. If the ban takes place, I will be forced to find an alternative to aid in managing my anxiety, and most likely it will be more harmful and less effective. I pray the DEA does the right thing, and pursues regulation over prohibition. - [REDACTED], 34 [REDACTED], PA

For ten years, I have suffered with the consequences of Lupus, which include chronic pain, sleep issues, stress, and fatigue. Medical professionals prescribed several types of medications for these issues including barbiturates, benzodiazepines, hypnotics, muscle relaxants, SSRIs, and strongly suggested I try opiates for pain management. At this encouragement, I sought healthier alternatives. The interactions and side effects from these drugs required constant experimentation, new prescriptions to counter adverse effects, and general discomfort. With a condition as unreasonable as lupus, stability and health become precious resources.

In 2015, I researched Kratom as an alternative. Luckily it has been able to replace the unstable drug regimens strongly suggested and provided reliable results and stability in treatment. It allows me to take several less pills with highly undesirable side effects and varying effects, pills not safe for long term use which is necessary from chronic health conditions. The DEA Kratom ban will upend my effort to manage my chronic symptoms safely. Rather than put my health in a further precarious state, I am inclined continue to live internationally to avoid federal prison for my healthcare needs. Kratom mitigates the majority of these extraneous lupus issues while providing consistent energy. - [REDACTED], TN (Currently, international resident). Age 28

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a Senior Software Engineer. I have Chronic Fatigue, Fibromyalgia and multiple spinal disorders. I used to be on Vicodin, Gabapentin and other prescription medications for pain management. Kratom helps me manage my pain and fatigue without any need for other medications. Unlike prescription pain medications, kratom allows me to have mental clarity so that I am able and keep my full time job as a software engineer. If kratom is made illegal I will have no choice but to go back to the prescription opioids that aren't as effective and have side effects that affect my logical thinking and make my chronic fatigue worse. I will loose my job because opioids impair my ability to think. Also, due to my constant debilitating pain, I am at risk for opiate overdose.

Kratom has helped me cope with pain, severe fatigue, and anxiety due to chronic illness, including fibromyalgia. I'm [REDACTED], a 52-year-old mother of two teenagers. I'm no slouch: I've earned a Ph.D. and two master's degrees at Stanford and Cornell. I work as a professor. I was high school valedictorian. I won a host of prestigious scholarships and awards. But illness doesn't spare the high achievers of the world. When I got sick in 2008, and stayed sick, I could barely function.

Several months ago, I tried kratom. I'm a scholar and a skeptic, but I decided it was worth a try. Kratom changed my life. My pain has become far more manageable, and I've regained the energy I need. Yet my mind is clear enough to teach complicated at the university level. The "psychoactive" effects of kratom are limited to a mild mood boost; they don't make me stupid, interfere with reflexes, or otherwise impair me. I no longer fear that I will have to retire early, and I'm able to resume volunteering in my community. My life has become richly meaningful, thanks to my renewed ability to be of service. Not least: I smile and laugh

more, and I'm more available to my teenaged boys. I have hope that I can live, not just exist – all thanks to a plant that is closely related to my morning cup of coffee.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I discovered Kratom over a year ago. I am a resident of Alabama and have been very afraid of what the government will do to me. I was a responsible user of Kratom, I have an Associates Degree in Medical Assisting. I have been working in the private sector for over 20 years. With all the tugging and pulling and moving of patients I developed degenerative disc disease, L5 disc is completely destroyed and a crack in my spine right above it. When Alabama decided they knew better what I needed than I did, I did the only thing I could, I suffer. Once in awhile we go out of state just so I can have relief for the weekend or a couple day, otherwise I suffer through it. I will never put my family or home in jeopardy having it here, but it has hurt my ability to work like I used too. I had the ability to make over \$700 a week working while I was taking Kratom. Now I barely can get up to move and make \$100 a week. We are in jeopardy of losing our home, (which is a tiny house) that we built ourselves from a shell of a storage building and our vehicles, we are dependent on my husbands income alone now because the State of Alabama chose to ban this plant that absolutely helped me in every way. I am praying this ban does not go through and it will help get Kratom back in Alabama so it can again let me be able to go back to work full time and be the person I once was while taking it.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 44 year old Catholic School teacher and the Director of Technology for the largest parish in [REDACTED], NY. I live in [REDACTED], NY. I was diagnosed with degenerative disk disease and spinal stenosis in 2000. I was 28 years old and was offered either oxycontin or spinal surgery. With one option I would have become dependant on opiates for life, or go the other route, and risk paralysis. I chose neither, so I chose to suffer. For 11 years I used Advil and Aleve. Advil did liver damage and Aleve caused wicked bleeding ulcers. I gained 100 lbs. I found Kratom through a Google search, for "natural pain relief" and tons of Kratom articles and success stories came up. I read, I researched, I purchased. On December 16, 2011, the chronic pain in my back was eliminated within a half hour of drinking my first cup of Kratom tea. Since then I became active, focused and motivated. I hit the gym again, and I lost the 100 pounds plus more. I am the healthiest I've ever been with a very physically demanding job.

If Kratom were to become illegal, I would be forced to stop it. Considering I am refusing synthetic pills and surgery, and I refuse to break the law, I guess I will end up on disability by the time I turn 45. I'm sure the weight will begin to add on, and I will eventually become homebound. On the days I don't use Kratom, my pain comes back with a vengeance and it would be impossible to continue my career. As of now, I am a healthy productive teacher. Please do not ban Kratom. I do not deserve to suffer for the next 30-40 years. It will destroy my family. I'd lose my home because I would not be able to afford my mortgage. I would lose everything. I refuse to take chemicals. I deserve to choose what I want to put in my body. Thank you for listening.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I'm a 39 yr old wife and mother to 4. I have fought severe scoliosis since I was 13 and was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, major depressive disorder, neuropathy and CFS to name a few. I was on meds for 10 yrs including narcotics, and was sleeping my life and my kids life away and was a zombie. I was looking for natural remedies and came across Kratom, I ordered some and never looked back!! In 3 years Kratom has given me my life back. I'm finally able to work after not working for 10 yrs, can run and play with my kids and have my life back!! Please keep Kratom legal and don't take my life away!!

[REDACTED] [REDACTED], age 57. Medical pain management for spinal, hip and knee pain from an accident when I was 13 years old. Before and after recent surgery I was on prescription opiates for several months which were absolutely debilitating and habit forming. Since I started drinking an occasional cup

of Kratom tea I haven't touched opiates. If Kratom is banned I will have no choice but to go back to opiates.

My name is [REDACTED]. As many others have, I found relief from several ailments using kratom. Ever since I found kratom, my quality of life has went up drastically. I am a 27 year-old who suffers from severe anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, and found solace shortly after discovering kratom 4 years ago. While my legal prescriptions to pharmaceutical SSRIs, painkillers and anxiety medications have somewhat helped, all of them concluded to actual danger to my health and mental state, along with harmful side effects. They did not compare to the safety of using the kratom tea to ease chronic pain, depression, and anxiety. This natural remedy is certainly the optimal solution in this case, as many others have found. I have since been able to rebuild my life, get off harmful prescription medications, and have once again become a positive member to society. The inability to use kratom would certainly regress my lifestyle and do real harm to my well-being. I could not imagine having to go back to a life without kratom.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder, RLS and related pain in 2012. I have been prescribed benzodiazepines, SSRI drugs and muscle relaxers. I am currently taking none of those horrible medications. Before my diagnosis I abused alcohol to sleep and deal with the anxiety. Honestly, while I was not anxious and could sleep on these substances, they stole my life. I was depressed, uninterested in anything that gave me joy and stalled out in my Doctoral program. Kratom has replaced all of these dangerous and addictive substances. It is a miracle herb and has given me my life back. I am currently working in Kazakhstan as an Assistant Professor of Media and Communication. I would have not been able to do this without Kratom. I have my Ph.D. and a variety of publications in my field. I do not feel addicted and have gone without the herb for extended periods of time. These periods are miserable not because of any withdrawals, but because my symptoms return.

I am sad to report that living here in Kazakhstan, I now feel more free than if I were in the United States. Also, I will not be able to return because I am about to be turned into a criminal. If I do return, then I will either be forced to submit unwillingly to medical treatment that I do not find productive or I will be forced to break the law in order to treat myself as I see fit. This is undue burden--forced to choose between something bad (dangerous medications) and something worse (jail) based on a unilateral decision made by regulatory agencies without any legislation or proof. The Alabama disaster will be repeated, with a 20% spike in overdoses and thousands of new opiate and benzo prescriptions issued. These drugs are the health threat, and this legislation will criminalize those of us avoiding this threat. Kratom is invaluable and it is of great importance to those of us who want to have options beyond what is peddled by big pharmaceutical companies. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED], Ph.D. [REDACTED], Kazakhstan & [REDACTED], Tennessee

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I'm a 48-year old teacher, mom and grandmother from Oklahoma. I heard about Kratom through an on-line pain support group. I suffer from Depression, Neuropathy, severe anxiety, Sjogren's Syndrome, fibromyalgia and arthritis. I have tried every prescription drug available. I was taking so much medication, I had to take medication, to deal with side effects of medication. I still had so much pain and the same symptoms I had begun with. Nothing worked. I have been dealing with my conditions for over 20 years. Before kratom, I was beginning the process to get on disability. I had no hope and no life. After kratom, I can work, play with my grandchildren, go for a walk and be a contributing member of society. I still have pain and anxiety every day but it is a lot less with kratom. If kratom is taken away I will be on disability, not able to work, not able to play with my grandchildren and I won't have any hope. I don't want addictive pain medicine that makes me feel high and that have other horrible side effects. Kratom is a plant that doesn't have horrible side effects and doesn't make you high. If kratom is taken from me I will wish I were dead because the pain will be so great. I don't want to go back there to that darkness of constant pain. I thought I lived in America where we were free to choose a plant to help our health if we wanted to??

I'm a 61-year old mother of three sons & one daughter-all of whom I have raised to be caring, law-abiding, hardworking, productive citizens of this great country. I have a beautiful 2-year old granddaughter & a grandson on the way. I have a great accounting job at a small company. Thanks to kratom, I rarely, if ever miss a day of work and I'm able to play with my grandchild, take her for walks to the park, and care for her 2 days a week. You see, I also suffer from debilitating knee pain along with severe neck pain from an injury. I use kratom leaf for my pain. I take about 1 teaspoon in the morning & another one at night. It's not a miracle cure, but it works very well for my pain and allows me to live my life fully and give myself to the people I love. I have been using this wonderful plant for a little over a year now. It never leaves me feeling "drugged" like I felt on pain medication. I never need more than my 1 teaspoon and I never crave more. I've never robbed a convenience store to get it and no one has ever found me passed out in my vehicle because of it! I just had my annual physical and I'm in great health. My husband and I bicycle often, sometimes 40 miles on a Saturday. I couldn't do that without kratom. I really believe this plant has helped me get my life back. To ban it not only makes NO sense, it's absolutely ludicrous. Turning many thousands of decent, good & law-abiding people--the many grandmas, grandpas, veterans, thousands of women suffering from endometriosis, & countless others who use this herb to improve their quality of life--into felons is a sad commentary on how low our misguided war on drugs has sunk. Not to mention the hypocrisy of banning a plant that helps so many people get off of the dangerous drugs that this very war is about!! - [REDACTED], [REDACTED], MN

I'm a 47 yr old high school teacher and mother of two. I've always been really active on my own and with my kids. As years went by my fatigue and widespread pain got worse until I barely got out of bed. I was diagnosed with osteoarthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and Fibromyalgia. All of this on top of the IBS, displaced cervical discs, degenerated discs, TMJ Disorder, and migraines that I had been being diagnosed with since the 8th grade. We tried the Cymbalta, Lyrica, and gabapentin (Norco for only the worst of days). With each, I got worse instead of better. Within six months I had packed on 60lbs and could barely function through the basic necessities of daily living. I seriously gave thought to removing myself from this planet. I ran across someone who told me about Kratom for pain and fatigue. I researched it and eventually gave it a try. I was amazed at the pain relief, energy boost, anxiety relief, and mood boost that it gave me. I used it to take myself off of one pharmaceutical at a time. It took months and the withdrawals from Cymbalta, Lyrica, and Gabapentin were horrid. The only pharmaceuticals that I still use are Enbrel injections, muscle relaxers, and the very rare Norco. Kratom has given me my life back. I'm a functioning interactive mom and high school teacher again. I gain no "euphoria" or "high" with Kratom. There's no intellectual muddiness, like with opiates or the antidepressants previously prescribed. The only side effect, if I take too much, is nausea. I switch strains each dose to keep my tolerance low, at 3-6 grams. I take it only when I have to, in order to be able to move. I still feel pain 24/7 but it's tolerable most days and I gladly smile again. We MUST keep Kratom legal so that I can keep my life. - [REDACTED] Texas

I'm a 31 year old mother of three. We homeschool and have a small homestead. Kratom is an awesome supplement that really helps with my chronic pain caused by spinal problems. I've been diagnosed with DDD, scoliosis, spondylosis, arthrosis, a fused SI joint, a bulging disc, torn spinal tendons, myositis, fibromyalgia and carpal tunnel. I've been taking kratom for two years now with no adverse effects. It helps with both my pain and the depression caused by chronic pain. I've never gotten any type of high from kratom and I've never had any of the side effects that go along with opioid use such as dizziness, nausea, confusion or respiratory depression. I would much rather use kratom to help my pain and depression than take lots of pills that affect your mood and ability to function. God gave us plants to help with the problems that arrive in life and I would be greatly disappointed if it was taken away. Many people use kratom to help with chronic pain, anxiety, depression, ptsd, etc. Not one death has ever been attributed to kratom alone and it isn't a danger to anyone, even in high doses. It doesn't cause dependency, side effects or any kind of altered state of mind. Please don't take away this herb that is so helpful to so many. Thousands of people have successfully used kratom to permanently stop taking prescription opioids or

using street drugs. I would say with today's opioid and street drug abuse epidemic kratom would be very helpful in preventing further overdose when used to wean off of other drugs. It doesn't treat or cure any illnesses but can certainly help with the symptoms of pain, depression or withdrawal. Please don't take it away from us! - [REDACTED], Texas

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 45 years old! I suffer from chronic pain due to DDD, herniated and bulging discs in my neck with bone spurs, dehydrated bulging discs in my lower back with a fracture, fibro, migraines, severe nerve root lesions, and crippling sciatica! When faced with all of this pain I am not able to perform my daily tasks, I end up bedridden for days at a time, and this causes depression! I have been to Pain Mngmnt and I ended up addicted and abusing the meds! I went to the methadone clinic and I ended up addicted and abusing that also! I stopped it all cold turkey and thought I would die! I began drinking heavily to numb the pain! In December 2015 I was introduced to Kratom and there has been no looking back! I have no desire or need for pills or alcohol! My quality of life has improved 110% with Kratom! Just when I seen the light at the end of the tunnel I feel like the rug is being jerked out from under my feet! PLEASE do not take this plant away and force me back to pharmaceuticals and/or alcohol! It will ruin everything that I have worked so hard to repair in my life! - [REDACTED], Ga.

I am 50 years old and use Kratom to ease the pain and fatigue of rheumatoid arthritis and neuropathy. Before Kratom I could barely get through my work week and I would just sleep through the weekends. Since I have been using Kratom I am thriving at work, still have energy after work to exercise and enjoy activities on the weekends. I even earned a Master's Degree because I finally had the energy I needed to study after work and on weekends - [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 43-year old male from Wyoming. In 2009 I suffered an injury at work. I have a herniated disc in my neck that causes me daily headaches, problems with my vision, painful muscle spasms in my neck, head, back, and shoulder. For 6 years I took harsh and addictive prescription painkillers and muscle relaxers. This year I was fortunate enough to find kratom. I have not had one sick day from work since starting to take kratom.

I can't imagine going back to life without kratom. The thought makes me tearful and scared. Please don't take kratom away from me! My professional career and home life will suffer again for sure!
[REDACTED] from Wyoming

[REDACTED], 30, [REDACTED], TX

I first learned of Kratom in 2013. I was an alcoholic and in a very difficult time in my life. I literally used Kratom to end my addiction to alcohol over several months. It provided immediate relief from my cravings and put me in a state where I was more motivated to focus on doing things positive for myself. I have continued using it regularly to this day, on a daily basis. In 2015 I suffered a back and leg injury that caused chronic inflammation and pain. I had no health insurance. To this day I still maintain a highly active and productive lifestyle thanks to this natural compound. I can manage my pain and stay in a great positive mood at my 60+ hour/week job with no prescription medications or abuse of any other substances like alcohol. Kratom has changed my life literally. I have recommended it to friends and family, some who have adopted it in their lives with great enthusiasm. For me, Kratom is primarily a safe and highly effective pain reliever and aid for any all forms of fatigue.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 34 years old. My husband and I have been married 11 years and we have a 9 year old son. My husband is one of the most amazing people I have ever met. He holds multiple

advanced degrees in Physics, Education, and Engineering. He plays 5 instruments, writes music and poetry, has a black belt in Jujitsu, builds furniture, blows glass, makes pottery, loves camping and hiking, and can fix my car. Seven years ago he began suffering from muscle spasms and debilitating migraines. After several MRIs, the doctors found that due to sports injuries sustained as a teen, my husband's shoulder blade and upper spine are wrapped in a mass of scar tissue that can not be operated on. He spent the next 3 years in physical therapy, having injections, and prescribed every painkiller, muscle relaxer and pill his doctors thought might help. Although the medications alleviated pain, they left him just a shadow of his former self. He could not work or participate in activities he enjoyed because his medications made him disoriented and dazed. He became depressed, slept most of the day, lost interest in family, and we ended up in marriage counseling. However 4 years ago a family friend suggested my husband try Kratom and it literally changed our lives. Today along with Kratom, he is prescribed only one medication to prevent migraines and one muscle relaxer that he takes occasionally if he has muscle spasms from too much physical activity. He no longer has to have injections or physical therapy. He works full-time, has been able to return to his hobbies, and even coaches our son's little-league team. Kratom gave my husband his life back and in turn gave me back my husband and my son his father.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 35 years old and live in [REDACTED], Oregon. I am a [REDACTED] at the Department of Human Services. I have used kratom for Restless Legs Syndrome and Irritable Bowel Syndrome since 2008. Before finding kratom I tried every prescription drug that is on the market for both of my chronic conditions. Every single medicine I tried was ineffective, or the side effects were so bad I was unable to continue treatment. In fact, the anti-Parkinson's medication my doctor prescribed for my Restless Legs Syndrome actually made my symptoms worse (this is a common side effect called "augmentation").

I am a law-abiding citizen (I had to pass a background check to be employed at my current job), and I respect the law greatly, and one of the main reasons I chose kratom (like the hundreds of other people I have talked to in the kratom community), is because it is LEGAL, and because it does not alter who I am as a person like some of the medications I used to take for my chronic health conditions. It does not impair me, alter my thinking or behavior, or affect my judgment.

The DEA may think it's as simple as choosing not to use kratom anymore if the ban goes into effect. But I have two serious chronic illnesses that have been successfully managed with kratom for more than 8 years now. I can sleep at night and not crash my car when I'm driving because an RLS flare up happens all of a sudden, because my RLS is helped greatly by kratom. I can focus at work because my RLS symptoms are under control. I can not wake up every morning sick to my stomach and throw up every day before I go to work, because my Irritable Bowel Syndrome disappears completely when I take kratom.

What does the DEA expect us to do? They have put us between a rock and a hard place. Most kratom users respect the law like I do, and are not criminals. We don't abuse illegal drugs, most of us don't even drink alcohol or use other prescription drugs. We are moral, ethical people by and large. But we also have chronic illnesses that require treatment, and kratom is the only thing we have found that works. It has given us our lives back. That is why you will find such passion among us. We are literally fighting for our lives.

I am a 54 yr old wife, mother of 4 and grandma to 3. Raised in an abusive home, I went on to an abusive relationship that lasted 4 very long years. I have suffered 31 breaks, including multiple facial trauma, cervical & spinal fractures, seizures, tremors, was in a coma for 9 days from a beating and hospitalized for several days from being stabbed repeatedly. As a result, I had migraines that could not be treated successfully, nerve damage that affects my arms and hands which forced me to leave my job as a hair stylist, was diagnosed with fibro, CFS, a/r. Fifteen years ago I was rear ended by a large van and pushed into oncoming traffic that put me in therapy for over a year, I never re-gained all my movement or strength

and added to my chronic pain. I went from Dr to Dr, to several specialists and each told me there was no hope for recovery and all they could do was try to manage my pain. I have been on Fentanyl, oxycontin, Methotrexate, percocet, percodine, codeine, Tylenol 3, Flexeral, Antivert, Dilantin, Cymbalta, Lyrica and others plus multiple shots of cortizone, steroids and nerve blocks in an effort to relieve my pain. None of them really worked; they either left me sleepy, unable to concentrate, feeling "out of myself" or just plain made me sick. To add insult to injury, I also found myself on other Rx's to combat the side effects of high blood pressure, nausea, IBS, body rash, mouth blisters, blurry vision and more caused by the Rx's meant to help. Then, about 4 years ago I found kratom. To be honest, I didn't expect much but I did want to get off ALL the meds or at least as many as possible. Kratom has changed my life; all by itself. I am clean of any Rx drugs and rely solely on Kratom now and even though I am not 100% pain free, I am 100% chemical free and that alone thrills me. The best part of Kratom is that I control my dosage, how much and when I take it and it is affordable--even though it is not covered by insurance. If Kratom becomes illegal, my life is over. I am happy now, I can sleep almost through the night; most nights anyway and even though I still have to space out my activities, at least now I can still consider going places. Before Kratom, I felt like a home bound prisoner. Please do not take away my only lifeline to family, friends and a future.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 48 year old mom of 6. I used to work in a RCFE and in schools as well as at the juvenile hall! I suffered Herniated discs in lumbar and cervical spine! I also was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome and had the surgery to release the nerves in both hands as well as a rotator cuff surgery. I am unable to do the work I used to do and when taking prescription opioids I developed high blood pressure and other unwanted side effects. Kratom has made it so I have energy and very little pain! I can keep my house clean again and keep up with my two younger children one 13, and the other 10. I don't have to stay in bed any longer during the day and I can be a better parent and spouse to help my husband. I am afraid without Kratom and the vitamins I take, I will go back to the excruciating pain I was in before that opiates don't take care of because you start needing more for them to work! I want to keep being a good Mom and also get a job again and Kratom gave me that hope again! Please don't take this hope away from me and the countless others that take it! I know they are saying negative things about Kratom but I know I have found none of those things to be true. The benefits far outweigh the risks. My blood pressure is now under control and I can live again for years I felt like a useless lump of pain laying in a bed waiting to die and I no longer feel that way. - [REDACTED], CA

I am a 43 year old woman who was a teller during a bank robbery in 1999. Since that incident, I have suffered extreme anxiety, including panic attacks, and have had too many occasions of being unable to leave my home due to pure terror at the thought of coming into contact with others. I had received prescriptions for Xanax and Seroquel, but hated the numbness and missing days both caused in me. After being introduced to Kratom in tea form (by a very intuitive friend) approximately five (5) years ago, these attacks and bad days are down to maybe two or three a year, rather than being a weekly occurrence. As an additional 'bonus' during this same time period, I have noticed a huge reduction in the pain from menstrual cramps and associated migraines. I fear that if this plant is banned, I will revert to my previous state of pain and fear, and I would like to avoid this at all costs. [REDACTED], FL

I am a 57 year old woman with no kids, who is the sole caretaker of my 87 yr old widowed mom. I was diagnosed at 13 w/double curve scoliosis but since we were Jehovahs Witnesses, bloodless surgery was out of the question. The pain, as I age, takes my breath away. I'm on disability because the damage being done to my nerves from the decompressing vertebrae is amazing! Doctors prescribed vicodin and oxycodone for pain. 13 years of taking it and then they couldn't give me oxycodone anymore so the started making me take oxymorphone. It was the only thing that they would prescribe because I'd gotten used to such a huge opiate load. Last Feb 2016, I'd had enough of driving an hour each way to the pain

clinic to pee in a jar. Enough of the stigma and feeling like a criminal for being on pain meds. I had read about the herb KRATOM and decided to try it. I'm not going to sugarcoat it. Cold turkey was like living in a Hyronomous Bosch painting but I did it with the help of Kratom! I've been off ALL pain meds since, and using Kratom when the pain takes my breath away. I have my life back. I am of use to society and can care for my mom and home, where before I'd just lie in bed all day, and count pills, wondering how I was going to make them last because there were never enough. Pain varies day to day. What works one day might not be enough the next. Or too much! I knew I had to stop. KRATOM gave me my life back. PLEASE DON'T LET THIS HERB BE BANNED!! It would be a mistake unless the aim is to have the pharms get all opiate users addicted to another drug. I only have to use Kratom a few times a week. Please! Just this once? Let it NOT be about the money for the Pharms? Please?

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a mother to a blended family with eight children, a grandma to four little ones, a wife, and a full time college student. I also have lupus and degenerative joint and disc disease. I was under a doctor's care for several years, but seemed to just get sicker and sicker. I was to the point I could barely walk, I certainly could not run and play with my children. I was merely dragging myself through the days, trying to make it for my kids--not living, just surviving. As my pain level rose, so did my tolerance for the medications I was prescribed. First it was oxycodone and xanax, then dilaudid and klonopin. But I was not getting any better. If anything I was getting worse. Then I realized I was dependent on the medications, and decided to self-withdraw, with only my husband's and children's support. My husband even tried to convince me that it would be okay to use a suboxone program, and was even willing to take me out of state if necessary, but I refused. I had trusted the medical system and it had failed me. I knew I had to do this on my own. After 14 days of hell that I would wish on no one, I was free of the dependence on the medications, but back to square one with my pain, fatigue, and overall malaise. I began researching for natural alternatives to improve my health and quality of life. That is how I came upon kratom. I decided I had nothing to lose, it was worth a shot. From my first cup of tea made from this precious plant, my life began to improve. I found I could move again, and not that fake energy you get from pharmaceutical painkillers. I slowly started to get stronger, healthier. I could play with my kids again. I could work in the yard. My husband still tried to baby me a bit, but as I got stronger physically, I got stronger mentally and emotionally, and soon he had his tough little woman back. Everything has changed. I have a better life overall. I tossed out the microwave, cook all our food from scratch, try to avoid processed foods (as much as we can afford!), I stopped taking all over the counter medicines, and now only consume safe herbal remedies and alternative medicines that come from nature! God truly has provided us with all that we need; we just have to be willing to take the time and patience to find it! My only bad habit really remaining is that I still smoke, but I went from three packs of mainstream raunchy tobacco to less than a pack of organic tobacco cigarettes a day, and I hope to give those up one day as well. I have had four grandchildren born in this time period since I discovered the benefits of kratom. My oldest two grandchildren are almost two years old (yes, both, one from each oldest grown child!), and they both think Grandma can do anything! I never tire of chasing them through the house, taking them out to swing, or having them help me in the garden. If we go out as a family, I am the one who carries them piggy-back for hours--they are my best little friends! My youngest children are six year old twin boys, and it is the same with them. We were out last weekend playing freeze tag, jumping over their toys in the yard, shrieking and running for base like nobody's business. Please, please, I do not often beg, if ever. But I am damned well begging now. Please do not take this away from me, or from them. I cannot bear the thought of my little ones or my grandbabies reaching for me and me having to tell them Grandma or Moma cannot pick them up. That is absolutely more than I can bear. I do not want to ever let them down. My older children are beginning to forget those dark years of sickness and doctors' offices and Moma laying in bed, exhausted, or crying; it has already begun to fade, and they believe they can count on me for everything once more. My little boys have no memory of that sad, sick broken woman, and my grandbabies never had to meet her, ever! Please, don't re-introduce her now. Thank you.

I am 45 years old and a 27 year veteran of the military. I suffer from chronic back pain (Vertebrae Degeneration). I also suffer from PTSD. I was on an Opioid painkiller for the chronic pain. About 8 months

ago I was searching for a natural alternative to RX pain medicine. I found Kratom and it has worked wonders for me. I have not taken a pain pill since. Before the kratom it was hard to function due to the intense pain, now I can do almost anything with very little pain. After taking the Kratom for a while I noticed the effects of my PTSD were noticeably less. I do not have the anxiety like I use to and my sleep is so much better. I pray they do not ban Kratom. I do NOT want to go back to the chronic pain I suffered and I do not want to go back onto pain medication. I am leading an active life and my quality of life is much better with the Kratom. I have also introduced Kratom to many veteran friends of mine and it has also helped them tremendously! So please keep Kratom legal for those of us who need it.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm 36 years old, a father of two and one on the way. I am the sole provider for my family.

I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease back in February 2015 after having a large section of my colon surgically removed. In the months leading up to this I was in excruciating pain because my intestines were completely blocked from inflammation caused by what I later learned was crohn's disease.

I still have frequent flare ups that cause me a lot of pain and discomfort. I am prescribed narcotic painkillers to help cope with that. I take them regretfully, when I do take them. I understand the damage they do to the liver with all the acetaminophen. They are highly addictive, I can't focus when I take them and they make you feel miserable.

When I realized that I was actually becoming dependent on prescription painkillers, that's when I started looking for an alternative. I lost a brother to an overdose on prescription pain pills, I've lost several friends as well. We're not talking about your everyday addict either. I'm talking about good hardworking people that had a legit reason for taking the very medications that cost them their lives.

Again, regretfully I still take the pills I'm prescribed when I have a bad flare up. The only reason for that is the cost. I have insurance, so it's a lot cheaper to get a prescription under my insurance that it is to buy Kratom but for someone without insurance, it would be a lot cheaper for them to buy Kratom.

Money aside, my plan was/is to get off the prescription medication all together with Kratom. In the meantime, it has allowed me to take the pain pills a lot less frequently and I have been able to transition from pain pills to Kratom without any side effects. I'm not an addict, never have been, I have to give Kratom a lot of credit there. Without having this amazing plant to fall back on.... who knows. I like to think I'm stronger than that but so was my brother.

Aside from the pain, Kratom has also helped with slowing down spasms in my intestines. When I have these spasms, you can see my abdomen contracting, Kratom seems to slow that down within 20 or 30 minutes after a glass of Kratom tea. It also help with regularity, I hate to go here, but it's an important issue and I think this could really help a lot of people.

My father has also benefited tremendously from Kratom. He is 76 years old and has been on pain pills for about 9 years! Well.... not anymore. He has not had a pain pill in over a month and his withdrawal symptoms have been almost non existent. Before we found Kratom, you couldn't even get him out of bed if he didn't have his pain pills. The symptoms were so bad for him, I couldn't bear watching him go through it! Vomiting, diarrhea, sweats, nausea and then there's the depression! Wow, it was bad. Not anymore. He actually asked me to pick him up and bring him to buy a car!! He hasn't been out of the house in months, let alone had a desire to drive anywhere or do anything.

I have a few other testimonials that I could share with you but for one, they're not mine to tell and two, I am a responsible adult with a family to provide for and a job to go to early in the morning and yet, here I am sitting here at midnight writing this letter to plead with you to help us fight for this amazing tea leaf that provides miraculous relief & benefits for myself and countless others.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 34 years old. I am a successful business owner and a regular, tax-paying citizen with a great family. Through no fault of my own, I suffered a bad accident and live with the pain every day. I took narcotics for years and had to stop because I realized that they were doing much more harm than good. My family said that I was a different person, and I was. I found Kratom a year ago and it was like a curtain was lifted. It is not a cure for anything, but it's indispensable for me. It simply makes life more manageable for me with less side effects than narcotics. What people who have never had chronic pain before don't understand, is that taking nothing is not an option. If this ban goes through I will have to choose between going back to dangerous pills, living my life in pain again, or keep taking kratom and be labeled a criminal. Just when I finally feel like my life is under control and I am happy again, the very people who are supposed to protect my rights are stripping them from me. I honestly don't feel free anymore. All this ban will do is cause people who have suffered all their lives to suffer even more. People will die because of this, and it is inhumane and immoral. What we need is more information and regulation. Please do not take this choice away from us.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 37 year old and I suffer from sacroiliac dysfunction, degenerative disc disease and have two torn annular fibers in my lower back. The doctors currently can do nothing to heal me and have told me directly that the best they can do for me is keep me "comfortable" by prescribing medication. The surgery that they could do is only 40% effective and could potentially lead to more pain not less. I've had this pain for 4 years now and it's sad to know that it is something I will deal with all my life. Kratom allows me to avoid being a haze all the time due to the Vicodin/tramadol/Lortab and other meds I was prescribed. I can function again. I find that kratom is more effective than any of those pills. If the ban goes through I will be forced to return again to the pain doctors and to have painful injections in my spine. I don't believe they help but they appease the pain doctor so that he feels he is at least trying to take steps outside of just prescribing meds. Truth is they hurt like hell and don't work and sometimes actually do more harm than good as they make me aggressive and I am in pain for weeks after getting them. I will have a life of addiction and pain doctors in my future if this ban goes through.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 31 years old and have been using kratom daily for the past few years. I have struggled with depression and anxiety for most of my life, and am recovering from past traumatic experiences. I take prescription medication for my symptoms. Though the medication does help somewhat, I remain symptomatic, and kratom is the only thing that has made me feel truly happy and optimistic. It has helped me to become more productive and socially engaged. I was miserable for years prior to incorporating kratom into my lifestyle, and since I began preparing this herbal tea on a daily basis, I have felt happier and more fulfilled than I have in a long time. The great thing about kratom is that it makes you feel good enough to make you want to do OTHER things that make you feel good, like live a full life without fear, worry, self-doubt, misery, or regret. By becoming more socially engaged and productive, depressive symptoms become even less likely. Without kratom, I will be in very real danger of resuming past self-anaesthetizing behavior, including excessive drinking. Obviously, alcohol consumption is NOT conducive to productivity, and problem drinking is not conducive to positive social engagement. I do not wish to return to those dark days, but in the absence of a reliable substitute to treat my symptoms, I fear I will have no choice. I fear I will become chemically dependent again, my life will fall apart, and my health will fail, just as it happened before. I am a college-educated professional trying to start my own business, and I have served my country in the Peace Corps. I am generally a good, kind, responsible person, who is simply in pain. I had limited options for properly dealing with this pain, especially during times when I could not afford health insurance. Even when I can, prescription meds can only do so much. Discovering kratom was nothing short of miraculous to me. After so much trial and error, I found a sustainable way to manage my symptoms, and just as I get my life together, that miracle is being taken away as a result of misinformation. Kratom is not a dangerous drug. It is an incredibly helpful herb with enormous potential to help people with chronic pain, whether physical or mental, live a happier, healthier, better life. Please don't take this miracle away from me and turn me into a criminal with this ban. Kratom gave me my life back, as it has for so many others. For that, it is something to be celebrated, not banned.

My Name is [REDACTED], I am 36 years old, a father of two and one on the way. I've been taking Kratom for over 6 months now. It helps tremendously in relieving the pain associated with crohn's disease. As the pattern goes, I'm prescribed percocet to help manage that pain but I've found that Kratom is a much better alternative.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a veteran of foreign wars, have been employed in the engineering field for 37 years, and now retired at age 65. My aging process has brought on chronic arteritis - causing me to have to rely on aspirin and other NSAID pain medications related to causing heart problems and or gastric problems if taken for too long. While looking for alternative pain medication, I ran across Kratom. Kratom has given me the ability to function most of the day, basically pain free while taking care of the day's work/tasks. Taking the right amount of Kratom to relieve the pain has an effect of taking approximately (2) cups of coffee, and that's it! Would hate to have to revert to the more dangerous pain medications!

[REDACTED] TESTIMONY - I am the face of a chronic pain sufferer. In 2001 I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia and immediately placed on the pharmaceutical superhighway. With each new side effect of a previously prescribed drug, I was given yet another drug to take. After being on the strongest pain med available (fentanyl patch) along with antidepressants, muscle relaxants, and various other meds I had finally had enough. No person should have to live their life around the schedule of taking 15 different medications! So I decided to go a more holistic route and discovered a miracle herb called Kratom. With this wonderful plant I was able to wean off many of the prescriptions, therefore reducing the many side effects of those drugs. In addition, my quality of life improved tremendously. I was able to get out of bed, take a shower, go to the grocery store, cook dinner and visit with family and friends. I also no longer had to depend on alcohol to self medicate what pain the pharmaceutical drugs didn't touch. Using this God given natural medication allowed me to focus again on something other than my pain. It gave me energy where before I had none. And I began to live life again. Now the government intends to ban Kratom turning all those benefiting from its healing powers into criminals overnight! Well I say no more! Where are my unalienable rights that are guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence upon which the government is supposed to protect? Why don't I have the right to pursue happiness? Where is my liberty, my FREEDOM TO CHOOSE? It should be illegal to criminalize nature! We Americans should not be mere pawns in the DEA and big pharma's game of chess. Many chronic pain sufferers will have no choice but to be bedridden again. Many will go back to being drug addicts as well. Not by choice, but by necessity. If Kratom does indeed become illegal, some of us will not even survive. I know of many military vets whose lives have been saved due to Kratom. Those who fought for our freedom, why is our government now taking away theirs? And mine. I don't want to go back to that place, that place of being a non-functioning, unproductive, bedridden sick person, instead of the vibrant person I've become thanks to Kratom. It is not a road I want to go down again. When the greed of our government overrules quality of life there is no justice and all is lost. When you can't live life free from pain by using what nature provides, so others can line their own pockets, there is no freedom, only pain.

My name is [REDACTED], and I'd like to share a little bit about the role kratom plays in my life. I am a 44 year old educator for a world renowned science institution, an artist, and a father and husband. I consider myself to be an upstanding citizen and a positive contributor to our society. For the past 25 years I have struggled with a variety of mental illnesses including Major depression, Generalized anxiety disorder, Panic disorder without agoraphobia, and alcohol abuse disorder. The symptoms of these conditions are sometimes debilitating. Even on a good day I am operating at 40% of my potential capacity. Through some miracle, I have managed my life despite these challenges but, once again, not to the best of my ability. I discovered kratom 2 years ago, and the transformation has been almost unbelievable. I have tried so many different medications. Antidepressants, anxiolytics, mood stabilizers and antiepileptics. I

have taken part in CBT, MBCBT, DBT, group therapies, and twelve step programs. All of these traditional therapies have been effective in one way or another but none alone, or in combination has provided complete relief, and the medications come with assorted side effects that are, sometimes, worse than the conditions they are meant to treat. I turned to alcohol for temporary relief and quickly descended into active alcoholism. After hospitalization and rehab, I have managed to achieve and maintain sobriety for 7 years but that comes with challenges of its own. Kratom, a simple leaf from southeast asia, has completely changed the quality of my life. Not only has it caused almost complete abatement of my symptoms (I'd put my function at 90% as of this moment, it is after all not a complete panacea) but promoted wellness in other areas of my life too numerous to detail here. I am a better father and a better husband, a better teacher, a better contributor to society as a result of this leaf and, finally, I have found contentment that I once thought impossible. All of these changes have come with nearly zero unwanted side effects. I consider this a gift from god, this leaf. Created as a benevolent aid to a life of wellness. It is no mystery to me that Buddhists consider this plant sacred and use it as an aid themselves. To take this gift from we Americans who through its assistance have found broken lives and bodies made whole again would be, in my opinion, an act of violence against god and nature. A destructive act that would cause irreparable harm to those who use this botanical. The results would be a return to sickness, addiction, and detrimental effects on the economy through loss of jobs and income and the added strain on the American health care system. People will die as a result of the DEA's rash and unconstitutional actions. This my perspective and this is my story. I thank you for listening and beg you to consider these words and those of the others who join me in sharing them. May god have mercy on our souls.

Hello, my name is [REDACTED]. I'm 49 years old, and have been drinking Kratom for 6 years. I spent all of my career with the exception of the last 5 years, working as an automotive painter. I'm currently an internationally published commercial photographer, having had my images published in The Grammy's Program, NBA Finals Program, Major League Baseball All-Star Game Program, and Paula Deen Magazine, just to name a few. Having crawled around on my knees on concrete floors in body shops for the better part of 30 years, and the last 5 years, spending long days on my feet and carrying heavy gear all day, I now suffer from chronic knee and lower back pain. The pain is so intense that standing up in the middle of the night to walk the bathroom is excruciating. My doctor has tried prescribing different mild pain relievers (I won't take the heavy narcotics, because I refuse to get addicted to them), and nothing has even remotely helped. Then I was introduced to Kratom Tea by a friend who was in a similar situation due to intense pain. Since that evening, my life has been changed. Now I can exercise again, run with my dogs at the park, ride my bicycle, bowl, and an entire host of other things that I thought I would never be able to enjoy again!! I'm even going out with my camera to shoot landscapes and bands, just for fun. I'm so excited because photography has been my passion since the 8th grade, but the intense pain, turned into a miserable day at work! Kratom Tea has saved my life, and made it a life worth "living" again!!!

Hundreds of thousands of people are experiencing this every day due to this amazing plant, with no side effects. Please don't take that away from us. There's nothing wrong with Kratom, and there's no reason Kratom cannot exist alongside the poisons provided by pharmaceutical companies. A lot of good people will suffer, and those fighting addiction using Kratom may even die, and for what? So big companies get richer than they already are? When do "We the People" start to matter again?!! How much money is enough? It's time for someone to step up and tell the pharmaceutical companies that they refuse to be bought out, and what they want isn't good for the people of our great nation. Everyone on these pages are begging you to "Please stop this ridiculous ban on Kratom!!" Our quality of life is in your hands, don't let us down!!!!

[REDACTED] in Florida

Hello, my name is [REDACTED]. I'm 49 years old and have been taking Kratom for 2 years. I broke my back when I was 19 years old. Two back surgeries. I managed without anything for about 10 years and then felt I needed something to deal with the pain. I went back to orthopedic and they suggested another

surgery. I couldn't deal with another surgery. They sent me to their pain management doctor. I really didn't know what I was getting into but trusted the doctor had my best interest. Was prescribed hydrocodone. I said wow, I think I can deal with the pain now. Well like a lot of people, all the doctor gave me was an addiction that would define the next 15 years of my life. In the end I turned into an animal and eventually turned to heroin. Then went to treatment inpatient. Detoxed but still couldn't deal with the pain and turned back to pain pills. I then found suboxone, thought this was the answer. Just another trap. Finally found Kratom! I was able to get off the suboxone and I take a total of 2 teaspoons a day of Kratom. My life is totally transformed. Now you're trying to take that away from me. I really don't know what I'm going to do if this happens. I can't go back to that other life, I will die for sure. Anything that can keep Kratom available I am all in!! I was able to save a marriage of 28 years, I have two grown children and hope to see my grandchildren grow up. Kratom works!!

Hello my name is [REDACTED] and after a serious car accident I was prescribed Vicodin. It didn't take long to go from 2 a day to 2 an hour. Once my doctor stopped prescribing them to me, I was hooked and needed to continue my habit. I switched to buying them illegally for two years. I lost everything because the pills were my only focus. Not family, not work, not anything. When I finally decided to kick the habit, I was told about kratom. I believe without Kratom, I would be dead right now. It not only manages the constant pain I still have because of my accident, but I am no longer a slave to the pills.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 39 years old. I am a mother of two. I teach martial arts and am currently in a program to receive my certification in personal training. I love playing sports and am extremely athletic. In the past two years I have had to have three surgeries from injuries I have sustained from my extremely active lifestyle. As a result of my many injuries, I have arthritis and bones spurs in my knees. I wake up every morning barely able to walk. I drink my kratom tea in the morning and I am able to walk pain free and am able to live the quality of life we all deserve. I have no desire to be prescribed pain medication.

My name is [REDACTED] and this is how kratom has changed my life. In 2008 at the age of 30 I was told I had a giant Tarlov cyst. I had a spinal surgery to try to drain my cyst that was on my spine in my sacral area, this did not work and I developed a spinal fluid leak. Again I went for surgery to stop the leaking, again no luck. I then was transferred to a third surgery three hours away. This did fix my leaking but unfortunately I had leaked too long and ended up with another very painful condition called Adhesive Arachnoiditis. This condition causes me pain to the point where I can't sit on my tailbone very long at all, which left me in bed almost 24/7. I was prescribed fentanyl and was miserable on it for 7 yrs. I was foggy and not aware of what I was doing while on that medicine. I met a special lady who told me about Kratom and what good it was doing for her. I started slow and read a lot. I found myself, that it was changing so many lives of my friends. I too became brave enough to attempt to come off the fentanyl. Today one year later I'm off fentanyl and out of bed. I'm clear minded and actually have times that I'm out of bed by 50% out of my day. I'm more stable than I have been in eight years. PLEASE Don't make kratom a schedule 1 herb. I would like to keep getting the most out of life naturally. Thanks for reading [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm 31 years old. I've been a regular consumer of Kratom for about a year and a half now. My main reason for using the plant is to combat consistent depression that has been affecting me for much of my adult life. I also have been addicted to opiates in the past (from about 2006-2015 off on) and Kratom helped me get off of them and live a normal life. I do not have cravings for opiates, and it provides me with a little bit of energy, mood-lift, and motivation--much in the same way coffee does, without the edge. I make tea out of the powdered leaves. I do not get "high" off of Kratom. I am an average working class American who uses an herbal supplement because it helps me with very few side effects. Antidepressants have not helped me. If this is taken away from me, I am extremely worried about my mental health, in addition to the possibility I might relapse back into opiate addiction. I am extremely

upset that I have to justify my usage of tea to my government, especially when the reasoning was factually skewed and done without public comment or research. It feels like a violation of my god-given right to help myself live a normal productive life, with a plant that has shown to be extremely effective and safe.

■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■, NC

I am a 32-year-old female who works as an Assistant Professor at a state university. About a year ago, I was crossing the street as a pedestrian and was struck by a car travelling approximately 25 miles per hour. The accident resulted in serious soft tissue damage to my knees and back, including several herniated discs in my cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine. The cervical disc herniations caused compression of my spinal nerves in the neck area. These injuries resulted in weakness, numbness, and sometimes debilitating bouts of pain. My back pain has been so significant as to force me to spend huge portions of my life on the couch and to prevent me from eating normally due to the excruciating pain associated with even minor movements such as opening and closing the jaw. Without forming an addiction, I have used kratom as an effective pain treatment for these symptoms, one that is less harmful, in a number of dimensions, than the prescription pain medication I have also been intermittently prescribed. I am concerned that this step by the DEA would either lead to more individuals with reduced quality of life due to chronic and significant pain or to reduced quality of life due to addiction to prescription pain medication. In the latter case, people also risk side effects, including death, associated with prescription pain medication as well as the social and medical consequences associated with maintaining an addiction.

My name is ■■■■■. I am a 58 year old male. Kratom stopped me from drinking. I got much healthier with kratom. Now I have to go back to alcohol which is much worse. The DEA's decision will cause the deaths of thousands and will cause great human suffering.

My name is ■■■■■ ■■■■■. I am a married father of three school age children. I am former NYC firefighter. I am a collapse survivor of both towers on 9/11/01. I suffer from PTSD due to my experiences and efforts on 9/11 and during the rescue and recovery in the aftermath. I have been prescribed anti anxiety and anti depression medications which I do not feel are helpful. I also DO NOT like to take prescription meds of this or ANY type. I Do NOT take illegal substances or drugs. I DO NOT drink alcohol. I DO NOT seek any type of "high or euphoria". That is NOT what Kratom is. That is NOT what Kratom does. I use Kratom as a tea or with orange juice. I find it helps relieve PTSD symptoms. It does not erase these extreme symptoms but helps to make them more manageable and less debilitating and this helps me to lead a life that is more manageable and fulfilling. The proposed Kratom ban is an unfair rush to judgement based on a total mischaracterization and misunderstanding of this natural herbal supplement that is being used to help so many people. A Ban like this will surely make my life much more difficult and my daily struggle to manage symptoms much more debilitating. My life will certainly become infinitely more difficult. Why would the DEA or the Government rush to judgement on this based on what can only be described as a lack of information and research. This is an unjustifiable overreach and an unfair rush to judgment that will surely impact many good people in a very drastic and negative way. Good people are trying very hard to manage their illnesses and conditions and this Kratom Ban will surely increase their suffering. Isn't that exactly the opposite of what the mission should be? Please take a closer look at this before letting this ban go into effect.

My name is ■■■■■ ■■■■■, I am a 30 year old mother of 2. I suffer from chronic back pain due to DDD and sciatica, anxiety and depression. I began consuming kratom on day 7 of opiate withdrawal from Dr prescribed opiates. When they stopped working and I asked for something different I was immediately cut off and fired as a patient. He has since quit practicing. I found kratom and it helped me get through the worse of the withdrawals. I continue to use it for my many diagnoses. I have found a quality of life I never

knew existed. I am not high. I am not impaired. I am terrified of going back to opiates, anti anxiety meds and antidepressants. I will likely be bed ridden most days with a feeling of dread for each day. My anxiety was debilitating even on benzos .What will become of my children mother? What will become of me?

My name is [REDACTED] and I have used kratom for anxiety, depression, and fibromyalgia. It has eased my issues in a natural way without the need of prescription drugs which cause even worse issues in themselves! We deserve a natural option to treat our health issues. Please help keep kratom legal and help the states where it's been banned make it legal again !

My name is [REDACTED], I am a mother, wife and a systems engineer. I have worked since college (a Bachelors in Computer Science) and have never been a burden on anyone. I don't smoke or drink, nor have i ever done illicit drugs and never looked for a high or any kind of euphoria. I suffer from painful injuries sustained from my days riding horses and competing in jumping events. I also fell down some hardwood stairs when i was pregnant, and to save my baby, i took the brunt of the impact in my back. I have also suffered PTSD and depression from a childhood trauma. I have taken regular pharmaceuticals prescribed to me without much effect, and with terrible side-effects. I discovered Kratom 3 years ago via a herbalist and I have never looked back since. This plant has given me back my quality of life that every person has a right to live. This proposed ban is cutting a lifeline for so many people, this does not suggest an agency working for the benefit of the people, but very much against them.

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm an award-winning author and a grandmother. I am also bipolar, so using common pharmaceuticals is not an option for me. Any prescription med that warns of mood changes or suicidal thoughts is like kryptonite and dangerous for me, so I must use alternative medicines for most things. I deal with chronic pain from fibromyalgia and a back injury, and opiates are not an option, either. Kratom has been a godsend! Not only does it help with the chronic pain, it helps me sleep and helps me moderate my moods. Placing Kratom on the Schedule 1 list will diminish the quality of my life by an order of magnitude. Please, reconsider and don't make me into a criminal for using a substance that God made.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I am a 36 year old male from Kansas. 10 years ago I had a major knee operation which did not go well and never healed properly. During this span of knee surgeries, doctors gave me thousands of painkillers without a 2nd thought. I became addicted, to the point where i was buying them on the street once i was cut off. The day i found Kratom was a beautiful day and allowed me to turn my life around. On top of that, my sister was an even worse case and Kratom truly saved her life. Do not let them stomp on our liberties, this plant should be revered, not banned. It saves lives and allowed my family to go back to normalcy.

My name is [REDACTED] and I suffer from chronic Lyme disease. Before kratom I was in pain all the time. Kratom gave me the ability to start living my life again. Prescription pain medicine didn't even help the pain. If kratom is banned I don't know how I will make it sometimes the pain is unbearable. I don't want to feel like that again.

My name is [REDACTED]. Herniated & ruptured discs, degenerative disc disease, unsuccessful surgeries, Fibromyalgia, anxieties and depression brought on by these illnesses, opiates and other prescription drugs, and the guilt and failure I feel as a mother have all robbed me of any quality of life for the past 20 yrs. Earlier this year I was blessed to have found Kratom. With Kratom I have been able to stop all medications. I am able to live free of my round the clock pain, able to know what sleep is like again, able to function a more normal life on a daily basis, every single day! Most importantly I am free of the guilty

feelings of failing my children. Kratom has given me a true quality of life back. I now fear I will have to live the rest of my life as I have for those 20 yrs past, I deserve to live free of that pain but without Kratom it just doesn't seem possible.

name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm a 51 year old former RN. Former due in large part to fibromyalgia, which was diagnosed in 1996, becoming increasingly worse over the last 20 years. I also have osteoarthritis (diagnosed 1996 as well), sciatica, anxiety and depression. Over the last 20 years I have been prescribed a multitude of medications. Some worked ok-briefly, some a little, some not at all. They all had a boatload of bad side effects. I began managing my symptoms with kratom about two years ago after an RN friend of mine recommended it to me. Much to my surprise it provided more relief than any of the pharmaceuticals I have tried, with minimal side effects. Really the ONLY side effect I have is constipation, which is easily managed. I experience NO high or foggy feeling. I can manage my symptoms with kratom well enough to allow me to care for my aging parents. Without kratom (which my mother also takes for severe arthritis) I am scared to death of how I will be able to care for them. Yes, I probably could get a Norco prescription again, however I would rather not. To avoid dependence on Norco I only took it a few times a week at most, waiting until my pain was severe enough to be in tears. I do not want to return to that existence. That is no way to live.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 38 year old wife, mother and small business owner. I suffer from chronic headaches including Episodic Paroxysmal Hemicrania, back pain from herniated discs, an annular tear and pinched nerves, and debilitating abdominal pain from IBS. I have been to countless doctors who have prescribed about 50 different medications, and none of them have really helped but several of them have caused terrible side effects. I would sit in the office of a pain clinic for 3 hours only to be prescribed narcotic painkillers that left me feeling high and nauseous, and seriously clouded my thinking. I discovered kratom about a year ago when someone suggested it as a natural alternative to prescription drugs. I did some research first and was unable to find anything that indicated that it was dangerous, so I tried it. I was skeptical but when I tried it I was amazed - it made the pain tolerable without making me feel high, and if I didn't take it I didn't experience any withdrawal symptoms. I was especially pleased with how it worked for my IBS. The cramping stopped, and I became "regular" again and was finally able to eat normally. I also became much happier because I was able to run my business and spend time with my family without being in constant pain or just feeling too sick to function. If this ban goes through I don't know what I'll do. Kratom has allowed me to stop all 5 of the drugs I was taking daily (some to treat the side effects of others), and now I can't bear the thought of going back to prescription pain meds.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 46 year old industrial maintenance technician for over 26 years. I have suffered from degenerative joint disease for over 8 years in my hips, knees and lower back. I was prescribed percocets and fentanyl patches for my pain for 6 years. I became severely addicted to synthetic opiates because of this. I hated the fact that I had to depend on these opiates just to function and work everyday. I found kratom 9 months ago, after doing research for natural pain relief. I cannot thank the discovery of this plant enough for giving me my life back, free of opiates and being able to have a clear mind. This plant has honestly saved my life. A plant that can relieve pain like kratom does and breaks the cycle of opiates abuse when I thought I would never be able to get off them, should be kept available to us. This plant has honestly gave me my life back, even though I still have the DJD, I can function, with a clear mind and enjoy life again.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 36 years old, a mother, & a wife, & a small business owner. I also have endometriosis, herniated disks in my back, & hip dysplasia. My whole life all I ever wanted was to be a mother. Only 2 years ago I was practically bed ridden & was told by several doctors I should start preparing for back surgery. I had to take my new baby to doctor's office after doctor's office and he watched as I was prescribed pill after pill. 11 medications in total including several narcotics specifically

100 percocets a month. This was no life. And I was not the mother I wanted to be. I was in pain but in so much of a fog that I just wanted to sleep. I was riddled with guilt every single time I opened a pill bottle and my son had to watch while mommy took her medicine. I was hopeless, depressed, and fighting anxiety because I felt so stuck. Don't worry they gave me a pill for that too. I stumbled upon kratom after trying to find an alternative to the harmful medications I was taking. I was interested because it is 100% natural & had been around for centuries with no reported deaths or overdoses and no real side effects. Especially in comparison to the chemical cocktail I got filled at the pharmacy every month. I felt like I found a miracle. And it truly is a miracle that this plant just grows on the earth and can & has helped so many people. Now my life is mine again. Mine and my son's and my family's. I was able to begin taking yoga classes and started seeing a chiropractor. No surgery. No pills. I haven't taken so much as a Tylenol in over a year. I can play with my little boy and make plans for the future because we are all healthy now. When I think that I might have to go back to that life on the couch riddled with pills and hopelessness it is too much to bare.

Please do not make kratom a schedule 1 drug. Please just learn the truth about what it is and what it is not. It is not an opiate. It is not a dangerous chemical. It is a plant. A natural miracle. And we kratom users are not addicts. We are mothers and fathers. Husbands and wives. We are teachers and nurses and small business owners who don't wish to be heavily medicated by the prescription drugs that are poisoning our country. Please make your decision based on facts and science not media hype and misinformation. Thank you very much for your time. Sincerely, [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED]. I discovered Kratom 3 years ago when my back pain got really out of hand. I was literally spending most of my days in bed because the pain got so bad I couldn't function. I have 3 children so I had to look for a way to control the pain without the side effects from opiates that would leave me sleeping more than being awake. I discovered kratom. I did a lot of research before ever taking a pill. I wanted to make sure it was safe for me. So after my research I was comfortable enough to order some and try it. It starting working on the pain for day 1. It gave me energy and made me feel so much better. 3 years later I am now back to working and raising my children like I was before my back took me down. I have scoliosis and sciatica. The pain would get so pain I couldn't even stand and now I work as a housekeeper at a hotel. Kratom gave me my life back. Opiates always left me in a haze and I couldn't raise my children feeling high all the time. I also feared taking opiates because I didn't want to get addicted so I am so thankful for Kratom and I know many many more feel the same way. Stop trying to ban a coffee plant and focus on the prescription drugs that are the real problem. Please stop the ban!

Sincerely
[REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED]. I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue around 15 years ago. I also have some neurological problems, including chronic migraines and restless leg syndrome and have spent more than my fair share of sleepless nights. I also had pneumonia several years ago that left me with scar tissue in one of my lungs. It burns every now and then and is quite painful at times. All of this has severely impacted my ability to work full time, which I haven't done in 12 years.

I've been put on many pharmaceutical medications over the years, including Neurontin, Cymbalta and Vicodin, which all helped ease my pain, but turned me into unemotional zombie. I cannot take NSAIDS due to another medical condition and I don't take pain killers unless I'm really hurting. But since taking kratom I haven't had to. I also suffer from depression and anxiety and the Cymbalta, which helped the fibro pain, really wasn't addressing the depression/anxiety issues, even though it's supposed to. So I started looking at alternative options, including botanicals.

I learned about kratom nearly seven years ago and decided to give it a try. It has been a godsend for me. Not many people were talking about it when I first started taking it, but all I knew was that it helped me not

only to be free of pain, but it also gave me enough energy to be productive and get through my day. I found that after 10 years of sleepless nights, I could get a decent night's sleep.

I don't consider myself a drug addict. I'm a 61 year old woman who suffers from pain. Kratom doesn't get a person high and you can't overdose on it (you will get sick if you take too much). I do not want to become a slave to opiates. I'd rather be in pain, but I honestly don't know what's going to happen to me and so many others if this ban takes place.

Hi, I'm [REDACTED]. A senior citizen, wife, mother, and grandma. I have suffered a non-cancerous brain tumor, which left me deaf in one ear 17 years ago and caused other cranial nerve issues to set in. I have Hashimoto's autoimmune thyroiditis, trigeminal neuralgia (one of the so-called "suicide diseases" due to the extreme pain it causes), herniated discs in neck, daily migraine for 32 years, spinal stenosis, generalized anxiety disorder, and end-stage neurological Lyme disease diagnosed last year but likely acquired at least 25 years ago. I have been on many medications for the above conditions, all legally prescribed and taken as the doctors ordered. I use no alcohol or illegal drugs and seek no highs from medication---only relief from symptoms. A year ago, I learned about Kratom and tried it, since RXs provide me such limited help. I have found Kratom to be wonderfully beneficial in remediating many of the terrible effects of the conditions I am faced with. It helps lessen my pain and makes my days and tasks far easier to manage. My life without Kratom will be difficult to bear. Please reconsider any proposed ban. Thank you.

My Name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 10 year veteran of the United States Navy and I have used Kratom occasionally over the past 4 years to manage symptoms of anxiety and depression. I chose to take kratom as a natural and more therapeutic option and have had great success in using it. I did not like the prescription anti-depressants given to me because I had adverse reactions to 3 different ones I've been prescribed and it was effecting my daily life. With Kratom I have been able to function as a normal member of society. I feel like kratom is just therapeutic enough to take the edge of. I cannot fathom the reasoning behind an all out ban on this tea leaf and implore you to reconsider and think of the thousands of people this will adversely affect. I live my life with integrity and I am certainly not a criminal. Thank you.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 36 year old computer programmer working for a startup in California. I am also a veteran of the US army infantry, having served twelve years and multiple combat tours. I have been diagnosed with chronic PTSD and other conditions which cause chronic pain in my back and knees and hands. The VA put me on many different pharmaceutical prescriptions to manage my PTSD symptoms, and opiate painkillers to manage my chronic pain. But as a computer programmer, it became virtually impossible to do my job on all of these medications. They also didn't work very well to fight my symptoms. There was a time in my life after I got out of the military where I couldn't leave the house. My life was in shambles, even with the medication. I started researching alternatives and found Kratom, a plant from Indonesia in the same family as the coffee tree. After talking it over with my VA doc, I decided to try it. Within a couple of hours of trying Kratom for the first time, my back pain was nearly gone. Over the next few weeks, I also discovered that Kratom helped tremendously with the anxiety and depression of PTSD. I was able to return to work, even starting my own business. I would say that nowadays, thanks to Kratom, I am just a regular person. I provide for my family, I am active in their lives again, and I work full time. When I take Kratom, I pay my taxes.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 36 year old Security Engineer from [REDACTED], WA. In 2012 I was diagnosed with cervical cancer and after 3 surgeries I was left with chronic pain which left me bedridden most days. The doctors provided me with all types of pain killers which still left me bedridden and unable to work due to their side effects. I would be slightly out of pain, but be too "high" to function. In 2013 I was introduced to Kratom by a friend who was utilizing it for her fibromyalgia. I tried it soon after and was amazed at its effectiveness. I was pain free, had some energy and it did not have the "high" that narcotic

pain pills have. I have been using Kratom ever since and it has given me my life back. I am now working which I could not do before, I am able to fully function which I also could not do before.

Not long after I tried Kratom I began reading what could only be described as propaganda against Kratom on different media outlets. There were misconceptions that Kratom was the new pain killer stronger than Morphine that cause relapses in opiate abusers. There were reports of deaths, however they were not proven to be caused by Kratom, just anecdotal evidence stating Kratom was the cause. For example there was recently a death attributed to Kratom by a mother who's son had committed suicide and she blamed it on Kratom since she found empty packets in his room. The young man was also on a mired of anti-depressants which are known to cause suicidal thoughts in young people. Correlation is not causation and I have not seen one credible death linked to Kratom where the cause of death was proven to actually be Kratom. I would like to also mention that while 15 deaths have been erroneously linked to Kratom, Four deaths in the UK and up to 60 worldwide have recently been directly attributed to the substance 2,4-dinitrophenol (DNP), an industrial chemical that has become popular among people wanting to lose weight, including bodybuilders and people with eating disorders, however this is not on an emergency list for Scheduling. The DEA notice also attributes over 600 calls to poison control, however to put that in perspective poison control received 4201 calls in regards to energy drinks and caffeine in 2013 alone.

Current peer reviewed studies on Kratom and its constituents have shown that Kratom has no acute toxicity, displays powerful antioxidant and antibacterial properties, assists with drug and alcohol withdrawal symptoms, contains several oxindole alkaloids which have exhibited potent immunomodulatory properties, and even contains constituents that have exhibited anti-cancer properties! A brief search in any scholarly database will present many peer reviewed studies and clinical trials that can attest to the medical potential of this plant. In short, Kratom does not present a significant threat to human health or safety on any level and does not belong in Schedule 1, period.

If Kratom does end up on Schedule 1, even temporarily, we will never be able to research this natural plant as a medicine because as we all know once this has been put on Schedule 1, it's not coming off. Marijuana is a great example. Adding it will make it almost impossible to do the research necessary to show the medicinal benefits. Kratom has been used for hundreds of years in Thailand and is currently banned, but Kratom, also known as Thang, Thom, and Biak, was not originally banned because of substance abuse. When the Thai government started levying taxes from users and shops involved in the opium trade many users switched to Kratom to manage their withdrawal symptoms. The Greater East Asia War in 1942 and declining revenues from the opium trade eventually suppressed the opium market competition by making Kratom illegal. Thailand is now looking to legalize Kratom once again as people have been using this for thousands of years with no cases of overdose, psychosis, murder, violent crime. Never in all of recorded history.

Not to mention this plant is saving lives. People that were addicted to opiates are being helped by it and getting their life back. That is not because Kratom is the same as opiates, because it isn't. It doesn't get you high, it takes away the withdrawal symptoms associated with strong opiate pain killers. Kratom was something they could use to manage their disease on their own time. It was easily accessible and affordable unlike the other options such as Methadone or Suboxone which is hard to get on a program if you don't have insurance or can't afford the drug. Now, with the DEA taking away that option I'm afraid people are going to go back to whatever they were doing before causing the death toll will skyrocket. If you want to save lives and keep people safe as you claim, you will keep Kratom legal.

I do understand there should be some regulations concerning Kratom, such as the "extracts" and "drinks" that people have made and added other known or unknown chemicals. These should be regulated, but I would ask that whole leaf remain obtainable.

In closing I would kindly ask you to please don't take my life away again. I am a mother of 4 who has to work full time to support her family and I am unable to manage my pain effectively in other ways. Me and

hundreds of thousands of others are begging you to reconsider this decision and look at both sides of this situation, not just the unproven fear driven side.

Sincerely,

██████████

My name is ██████████ ██████████. I am here to say that as a 64 year old woman I never thought that I would take something like Kratom. After many decades of pain due to spinal stenosis and fibro and trying all that the doctor's told me to try; pain pills, antidepressants, spinal blocks, physical therapy, I finally just didn't use anything for years because none of those things worked and why should I spend money on something that didn't work and could potentially make me an addict or worse. So after going another decade just getting by because of constant pain and fatigue and after much, and I mean much, research and encouragement from family I tried Kratom. I could not believe how much relief I had almost immediately. Now I don't take it on a daily basis, but when I am really in pain or having a flare I know that I can get relief and that is a life changer for me. In fact, a couple of weeks ago, my daughter and granddaughter wanted to go see a cave because granddaughter had never been in one. Well, I took the Kratom that morning with some orange juice and for the first time in a very very long time, I walked for over an hour down stairs, and ramps and uneven ground in a cave. Yea, I might have a life back to enjoy with the grandkids.

That was what i thought before the DEA published their intent to ban Kratom and make it a Schedule I drug. This is so wrong for so many. I hope you will take this as serious as those of us who have gotten our lives back and are functioning, stable, contributing members of society.

My name is ██████████ ██████████ and I am a mother of a 2 and a 3 year old, working at a bank and going to school full time for computer science. I was in a hit and run with a drunk driver, while I was pregnant with our son. Because of that crash, my son was born over a month early. I suffered broken ribs and many other injuries, including physical and many emotional. I couldn't function as a part of my family. With the pain and PTSD, I couldn't take care of my children, I couldn't have a relationship with my friends, or with my fiancé. I lived in bed, in pain, until I was on enough prescription meds, prescribed by my doctor, to kill me. Which it nearly did. The meds only worsened my anxiety, my depression and barely worked for the pain. I thought I would be better off dead and no longer just a burden to my family. I was on (and completely addicted to) several anti-depressants, anxiety and pain meds. I had no quality of life. No way to hold down a job, school, or anything else. Finding kratom literally saved my life. I was able to get off all of the medications. My anxiety, depression, insomnia, were all gone but most importantly the severe debilitating physical pain. Was gone. I am able to function as a productive part of society, hold down a job, my family and go to school. Without kratom, none of this will be possible for me any longer. I am able to play with and take care of my kids. And contribute to my family. I feel like I am actually worth something. And I am terrified of what will happen to me, if kratom is banned. It is definitely life or death for me. Thanks for reading.

I am a registered nurse of 17 years with a bachelor degree, working on a master's. I am also a "Kratom consumer". Years ago I had a series of back injuries from lifting patients. This led to an autoimmune disorder called Ankylosing Spondylitis. A disorder that primarily attacks the spine. I have worked in various departments, from OB to ICU.

Caring for thousands of patients over the years. I tried every therapy available, from pain medication and injections, to acupuncture and herbal remedies. Nothing helped. I found myself no longer able to do my job effectively. And have had to since take a "desk job" reviewing charts. I still suffered immensely despite the biologic therapy (Humira, Remicade, and now Cosentyx) and as of last year was seriously looking into disability. Which would make me no longer a continuing member of society, and a financial burden to

taxpayers. But last year I was introduced to an herb called Kratom.

I researched the plant extensively before even attempting to try it. I am personally against any recreational use of any substance and to this day have never tried a single illegal drug, even when I was young. After my research, I tried it. I found not only did it help with my pain, but I could think clearer and function better than I had in years! The worst side effect was constipation. I was able to wean off of prescribed opiates, which did help with pain but made it impossible to do my job. And as a nurse, I can not have any mind altering substances in my system while caring for patients. Since Kratom doesn't cause the drowsiness or alter my thinking process like opiates, I am now able to work better than I ever did before.

I have several other agendas. The first being that I have family that depends on this herb to function. One with an autoimmune disorder similar to mine, and several others with back injuries as a result of construction jobs and motor vehicle accidents. All have said that they cannot function well without Kratom. Not because of a dependency, but because of pain. And these are hard working individuals that have tried every other means available, including surgery and various medications. The other agenda I have, is I lost my spouse to suicide when he could not get the pain relief that was so desperately needed. We have insurance and he literally spent years trying every treatment and medication available to no avail. He despised drug use and never took illegal drugs in his life, and rarely took prescriptions. I often wonder if this herb could have saved his life. He was disabled for our entire 10 years of marriage and leaves behind a 9 year old daughter.

I'm a married 30 yr 4-year college educated, stay at home mom to 3 intelligent, healthy children. Some 10 years ago I was prescribed opiate painkillers for a chronic condition, Interstitial Cystitis (diagnosed via instillation and cystoscopy). I became physically dependent on the narcotic pain relief prescribed to me. When those became unavailable, my drug abusing husband introduced me to heroin to ward off withdrawal. I used that for a short duration, until I found out I was pregnant. I immediately told my OBGYN of the situation, and not wanting to risk a miscarriage from withdrawal, she placed me in a methadone clinic. There I stayed for 8 long encumbered years. I was a model patient; however, I became frustrated given that the dependency that led to my placement in the program lasted only a month. The clinic itself did nothing in terms of advocating for me to wean myself out of the clinic. In other words, while this was the safest course of action for my unborn child, this maintenance treatment had made my dependence far worse. The methadone sugar cravings wreaked havoc on my teeth and caused heart problems. I also had a close relative die from a methadone overdose during my own time dealing with the maintenance clinic setting. The heart problems landed me in the hospital when I had a seizure and was diagnosed with elongated QT syndrome, caused by the high dose methadone, at which point I was switched to suboxone. However, I was in a good place mentally in my life and I wished to be beholden to no one but myself. I had no desire to seek a "high", but I was still fearful of the withdrawal that I would incur from suboxone detox, so I researched and found Kratom. I am so eternally grateful that quality, Kratom-community vetted products from reputable vendors were available to me during this period. As a nearly catatonic mother and wife from the effects of the methadone and suboxone I felt as though I was nothing more than a burden to my family. Kratom use has never made me feel intoxicated, altered my perception of reality or cause me to have cravings after disuse. It did not make me high in any sense of the word; it repressed my pain, anxiety and depression with a slight energy boost like coffee without the jitters. I was human again. I stayed on Kratom daily for about six months, & I came off of Kratom completely a month ago. Now for the first time in a decade I am completely psychoactive substance free. There were some slight withdrawals associated with my Kratom detox after daily use for 6 months. Objectively, these included: chills, mild depression and anxiety, but the anxiety & depression were present before I found Kratom and after cessation. If Kratom were to remain legal, I would undoubtedly prefer to utilize Kratom tea to combat my ongoing depression and anxiety over prescription medications. I have tried many, only to stop due to the debilitating side effects I've experienced. I can only speak for myself and how Kratom has helped me become a better mom, wife and overall human being. Despite not being a current consumer of Kratom, my heart breaks for those who's livelihood and families will be torn apart from

chronic pain or addiction should this DEA ban become final. My focus of advocacy sits on the heavy weight this puts on the humanity of our great Nation. The opiate epidemic is real and killing countless more everyday, when a quasi-solution is right before our eyes. This "temporary ban" is the real "imminent threat to public safety." As a once opioid dependent person, I wanted nothing more than to admit my faults and take full control mending my own physical health, while working in conjunction with my mental health professional. My heart breaks for those whose livelihood and families will be torn apart from chronic pain or addiction should this DEA ban become final. The gift of Kratom raised me out of a prescription-induced fog and dramatically increased my quality of life. This was only made possible as it was extremely effective, and more importantly, easily available, from reputable vendors for use in the privacy of my own home, with family support and supervision. Like any ingested substance, responsible use is the key and as this grassroots moment has shown, clearly, the responsible consumers far outweigh the outliers in this scenario. Please understand, I advocate for responsible Kratom use and public availability, not for me, but for the sake of the children of those suffering from the disease of addiction, chronic pain patients, anxiety/Depression/PTSD suffers, and all who will deal with the inevitable fallout from this well-intentioned but misguided decision.

I'm 65, a retired writer and horseback riding instructor. I was on hydrocodone for chronic pain since my first (of four) back surgeries in 1996, so 20 years. I learned about Kratom last year. It is the only thing other than opiates that helps this one particular kind of back pain that especially debilitates me. I have said often that finding Kratom for me was like getting released from prison. Now I will have to go back in. I don't want to live much longer that way, so I will probably check out early, especially since my fellow humans are sending me the message that they do not care that I have to live in misery. I won't. And I find myself hoping karma smites them.

A Kratom ban will not save lives, it will cost them, and mine is one of them.

██████████, 59, ██████████ Tx. After 15 years of relentless pain from Fibromyalgia I developed Trigeminal Neuralgia. I now have suffered from the condition known as the "Suicide" Disease (for which there is no cure) because the pain is so severe, for 10 years in addition to Fibromyalgia. Until my discovery of Kratom I was at the mercy of very serious medications that came with very serious side effects. Kratom has enabled a huge reduction in some of those medications. I no longer need to constantly take antidepressants, anti anxiety meds or strong pain killers. Kratom has enabled a intensely needed improvement in my quality of life! Never have I experienced a foggy head, "lala" land, confusion or hallucinated with Kratom like the other meds caused. I live with a deep sense of gratitude every day! Please do not take away my option of an improved life by banning Kratom!

My name is ██████████. I am a 30 year old professional from Idaho. In 2008 I had a traumatic spine injury resulting in chronic pain. I hated taking prescription opioids for pain as they hampered my quality of life more than they helped. I found Kratom in 2012 and have taken it since with no unpleasant side effects. It has helped me with my pain, energy levels and positive outlook on life. I have reviewed all available data and I firmly believe that Kratom is as safe or safer than coffee and other caffeine containing products. Kratom should remain a supplement in the United States as it is in Canada. Many states have reviewed the available data on Kratom and decided to keep it legal. Please, focus on the problem: Prescription painkillers and illicit drugs. Kratom is not a plant that can be easily abused as it has a ceiling effect i.e. more is NOT better. Please step in to stop this regulatory overreach by the FDA and DEA. This plant is also a great tool in the fight against our current opioid problems. Kratom is NOT an opioid. This is FACT. Contrary to the statements from the DEA, Kratom has been the focus of intense study and has been found to be effective in helping people with a multitude of issues. What will they ban next? Coffee? If the DEA applied the same logic to coffee it would be a schedule 1 substance. This is a deplorable act on the part of institutions that have been entrusted to protect Americans.

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm a father of 5. Several years ago, I had an industrial accident and had to have my shoulder rebuilt. I was in constant pain and the doctor's solution to that was to give me all the narcotic pain medication I wanted. After using opiates for 6 years, I had become a legal junkie. Not only was I taking the pills for pain, but also to get high. One day a friend suggested kratom. I ordered some and quit taking opiates cold turkey. 4 years later, I haven't touched an opiate and am able to successfully manage my pain with kratom. Kratom doesn't get me high, and I am not addicted, as I sometimes go a few months without taking it with no ill effects.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 33 years old. I suffer from Fibromyalgia and Endometriosis. Before I found Kratom I was in so much pain from my illnesses that I would be bedridden at least 2 weeks every month. I was on 10 medications and severely depressed. The pain medications my doctor prescribed didn't really help with the pain and I became dependent on them. Seven months ago I found Kratom. Since then I have not stayed in bed one day. I am now only taking 2 medications. Kratom has helped improve my life immensely. I am no longer depressed. I even exercise now and have lost 25 pounds. My kids and husband love the person I've become and so do I.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a mother and I work as a piano and violin teacher. I have been taking kratom for two years to help with pain issues. I had a prescription for pain medication before but the prescription medication left me feeling sleepy and sick for a lot of the time. When I started taking kratom it made a huge difference in my quality of life. It helps me deal with the pain (shoulder and back) and also helps with energy. I do not want to have to go back to prescription opiates. I might have to if there is a ban on kratom.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am 51. I have suffered from severe fibromyalgia for 10 years. I am married and have three children in college. My doctor has tried a multitude of prescriptions to help me and yet I remained bedridden. We tried Lyrica, Savella and many heavy hitter narcotics, even fentanyl, and nothing really helped. I have been to the University of Michigan hospital and the Cleveland Clinic and they couldn't find anything that could help.

Because of kratom I enjoy my family and they enjoy me. Before kratom i was chained to my bed or couch with pain and had to use a walker or wheelchair. I have been taking kratom for 2 years. Before writing this testimonial, I went on a 10+ mile bike ride with my husband. We do this pretty much everyday. Kratom isn't a cure. But now I finally have a life.

I feel like I have a sentence of death with this ban looming over me. My family and I are trying to do everything as fast as we can with events. And are doing household stuff too like putting things in easy reach as the pain will be excruciating to reach for or lift things without kratom. And tightening all stair railings as i will have to pull myself up the stairs without kratom. We have a trip to Wyoming planned for next summer with the solar eclipse. I will have to stay home and will have to find someone to stay with me should kratom be banned. I don't want to go back to being bedridden again. My family will lose me again if kratom is banned. My husband and three adult children are also fighting to keep Kratom legal.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I have several medical conditions which have all been GREATLY improved if not eliminated by my use of kratom. 1 Failed back syndrome 2 DDD 3 Arthritis 4 depression 5 Anxiety 6 High blood sugar 7 high blood pressure 8 Restless leg Syndrome. I have also gotten off most of my medications for these by using kratom which has helped more and with no side effects.

I was on 180 mg of Methadone for my constant pain and now I don't take anything except for kratom which manages my pain so much better. Please don't allow the DEA to ban this plant that has helped me

be a productive person again. I'm now able to work part time, play and interact with my grandkids and have a normal life where before on pharmaceutical drugs I was house bound unable to do much except to lay around in my recliner watching tv or sleeping due to the side effects of those drugs. In all, I appreciate your time reading this thank you.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am 31 years old and I suffer from chronic migraine disorder. I have had migraines since I was a teenager but later on in my adult life they have got much worse to where I would have either a headache or migraine almost everyday of my life. I have been through countless medications (including Botox injections) and doctors to try and resolve my headaches but either would have unbearable side effects or no effect at all. I have struggled to maintain a job without getting any sick days and missing too much work that I had to be reduced to less hours. Chronic migraine is the 8th most disabling disease in America yet migraines are the most underfunded neurological disease.

I discovered Kratom after looking for other natural avenues to help my migraines since I was having no luck barely at all to resolve my pain. I researched it and decided to give it a try. I took a small dose of it and then started to see the results very fast. I have gone to having a headache/ migraine almost every day to only having a few a month. I have been able to go to work on a regular basis and get back to regular life. Kratom has helped me so tremendously and I'm afraid after it is banned I will be forced back to medication that doesn't work for me and back to pain everyday. I finally have my life back and I don't want to go back to my old life of pain and solitude. This ban can affect my life a lot and I'm scared to see it happen.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I'm 35 years old and I'm a Cardiovascular Sonographer for a large University Hospital. I am a homeowner, tax-paying, law-abiding, professional. I'm a wife, sister, daughter, colleague, friend and neighbor and I've also been using Kratom for the last 4 years to help with depression, anxiety and to manage a past addiction to prescription painkillers. I've dealt with depression and anxiety my whole life to the point where I've been hospitalized for panic attacks. In 2009/2010 I had a few significant traumas occur in my life, one of which being my dearest friend committing suicide by putting a gun in her mouth and pulling the trigger. That was the straw that broke the camel's back as they say. At that same time I was prescribed Vicodin to treat a leg injury I had sustained and like many others I found it also assuaged the deep emotional pain and anxiety I was dealing with all day and night. When I realized I was addicted I went to my Doctor right away because I had never so much as smoked or done any substances before. He prescribed me Suboxone which was POISON for my body. I searched high and low for an alternative that would be safe, natural and not just swap one problem for another. I found Kratom and haven't touched a prescription opiate, anti-anxiety, or suboxone in four years. I'm the happiest, healthiest and most productive I've EVER been in my life and Kratom is an integral part of that. I'm afraid if this ban goes through I'll be forced to either become a felon (not an option), suffer and potentially relapse, or go back to pharmaceuticals that not only not help me but HURT me. This is LIFE and DEATH for hundreds of thousands of Americans. This plant has brought nothing but good into my life and if it's ripped away I fear for my very life.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED], BA, RDCS, RVT

My name is [REDACTED] & I'm a 39 year old female. In 2006 I was diagnosed with Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy. On top of this, I also have chronic back pain from bulging discs, degenerative disc disease & a decade of working on an assembly line for [REDACTED] Co. There is no cure for my condition. Doctors prescribed me powerful narcotic pain medication to treat my pain. The side effects were terrible, so I was prescribed more medication to treat side effects. Eventually the meds stopped working. Taking the medications made me sick, but not taking them was worse. I felt hopeless in this vicious cycle & had no quality of life. Then I saw a post in my Facebook Chronic pain support group about Kratom. I did some research & placed an order. Kratom saved my life. I was able to quit taking all my pain, depression &

anxiety medications. The last 514 days since I started taking Kratom I have been able to do more than I did in the previous 8 years. I feel like I've got my life back.

This is LIFE and DEATH for hundreds of thousands of Americans. This plant has brought nothing but good into my life and if it's ripped away I fear for my very life.

I am a 47 year old responsible female. I found kratom almost a year ago and have been using it daily since then to manage my chronic pain and fatigue from fibromyalgia and hypothyroidism and other chronic health issues. I was diagnosed with fibro in 2003 and was put on disability by 2004 and spent most of my days in bed. Numerous medications was tried to help with all my many symptoms but few if any really helped. Was on antidepressants, muscle relaxers, pain medicine, Fentanyl, percocet, norco, adderall, nuvigil and many others. kratom has been a lifesaver for me and has given me a better quality of life than what I have had for the last 15 years. I really don't want to go back to living my life spending all my days in bed which is really not living at all. I'm afraid that is what will happen if this amazing herb is banned, and Not just my life that will be adversely affected but thousands of others as well. Praying the ban is stopped, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm a 40 yr old married mother of 2. I have had chronic back pain (lumbar disk degeneration, arthritic muscle spasms) since 2005. I have been on pain relievers and muscle relaxers since then. I was tired of taking pills and them not always working so I went online to find an alternative and found KRATOM! I read nothing but positive reviews about it. I immediately stopped taking pills and it's been 4 yrs now. Kratom saved my life, I am able to work full time, take walks with my family and do everyday normal activities due to Kratom. My life will be turned upside down over this DEA ban and it's not fair. I don't want to go back to pills and I won't. A natural leaf that's compared to coffee should not be banned. People should be able to take any natural remedy that they want, not the DEA telling you it's in the same class as heroin. It deeply saddens me.

My Name is [REDACTED]. I am 51 years old. I work as a database report writer. I have suffered my entire life from anxiety and severe depression. Anti-depressants and anti-anxiety meds have not been of any value to me as I felt little to no effect from them yet experienced severe side effects. I first tried Kratom a little over a year ago and found the effects it had finally provided some relief to both the depression and the anxiety. Everything about my health seemed to begin to balance out. I stopped consuming as much alcohol, got a healthy appetite back, slept peacefully and was generally better able to manage my life. Please reconsider the ban on a dried leaf from a tree that has saved my life.

My name is [REDACTED]. I have been using Kratom for chronic pain caused by the side effects from an extensive course of antibiotics for about two years, as well as gradual and long-lasting pain from complications of H-Flu Meningitis which caused me to have spinal cord damage. Before I heard about Kratom, I was taking Vicodin, but upon stopping the drug, I began to suffer extreme symptoms of withdrawal, even though my dosage was quite low. In the few weeks after stopping the Vicodin, and researching natural pain relief, I had resorted to over-the-counter pain meds such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, and Excedrin, at one point taking as many as ten to twelve pills a day. As a result of believing I'd have to deal with this pain for the rest of my life, I was also facing depression to the point where my family started to worry. I was skeptical about Kratom, at first, but figured I'd give it a try. To date, I rarely take synthetic pain medication. Not only has Kratom provided me with wonderful pain relief, but I spend a lot less money on it compared to what I was paying for over-the-counter pain relief.

If Kratom were to become a Schedule I drug, I would have to face the real possibility of catastrophic side effects associated with prescription drugs, as well as OTCs. Knowing that Kratom provides strong pain

relief without side effects gives me peace of mind that I will never have to face medical complications in the future.

I am a 61 year old female with 2 Herniated disks, Spinal Stenosis and Sciatica. I was prescribed cortisone, Xanax, Soma, and Oxycodone. I was not at all functional. Previously I had mothered 4 children (triplets are in there), and been very successful in Financial and Supplement sales since age 31. I don't like not functioning or working. When I found Kratom I got my life back. It is very "self regulating". If you take too much you vomit. This is about freedom of choice. We need some folks interested in Science here.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 55 years old and I have been using Kratom for over 5 years. I like so many people started out using pain pills because of numerous surgeries. I searched the internet for an alternative to pain medication and found Kratom. It has been a lifesaver. Two years ago I lost my only child to alcohol. I am pretty sure without Kratom, I wouldn't be here today. Besides helping with the pain I have, it helps me to get out of bed in the morning. The hole left in my heart is never going to go away, but with Kratom I can at least make an effort to get through another day. I don't know what I will do if I can't use it anymore. I do not want to be sedated for the rest of my life with pharmaceuticals just because they are legal. I prefer the natural way instead of something created in a laboratory. But I also prefer Kratom because it has worked for me.

I am a 32 year old woman with a 5 ½ year old daughter. I am an artist, musician, jewelry designer, wife, mother. I have a family history of alcoholism, and severe anxiety/depression. I also suffer from chronic back pain due to fused vertebrae in my spine. Over the years i tried several anti anxiety medications, have been addicted to opiates and a heavy drinker. My drinking got so bad that I did not foresee a day that I would be able to get through the day without a drink (or 5). I sincerely believe that if i had known about kratom sooner my drinking would not have had such a detrimental effect on my life. Nothing else has worked as well for my anxiety, for my pain, and to keep me from drinking. I don't even like the taste of alcohol anymore. I also believe that if the several friends I knew who died from drug overdoses had known about kratom, they may still be here today. I don't like to think about what will happen if it becomes illegal, when it helps so many people. It has truly changed my life for the better. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED], California

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am 28 years old and I have used Kratom for close to two years now to help with arthritis from a hip replacement as well as opiate addiction. I was in the worst place of my life two years ago before i found kratom. I had no money and no hope of escaping prescription drugs or heroin addiction. I took a title loan out on my car to get suboxone which failed me miserably I was back to narcotics within two weeks. Then I found kratom I now have a new car with money in the bank and my fiancée and I have 2 month old son. Currently I'm looking to buy a house for my family in the spring. Please don't take away my life from me and my family

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am 24 years old and a graduate of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] University ([REDACTED]). I first started using kratom a couple of months ago for Anxiety, ADHD, and Depression. It has literally changed my life. I DO NOT use kratom to get high. I just take a 2-3 capsules 2-3 times a day and it helps my ability to focus immensely and allows me to relax and not pay so much attention to my often negative and non-productive thoughts. It is literally the only thing I've ever found that truly gives me relief from Generalized Anxiety Disorder. I cannot imagine this plant becoming illegal and I hate the idea of being criminalized for just trying to help myself. The only negative side effect I've occasionally gotten from kratom is constipation but that is nothing compared to the side effects I've gotten from prescription medications like klonopin (clonazepam) which has caused me to have suicidal thoughts (something I

previously was never experienced with). Please, please, if you're reading this, do whatever you can to keep this life-saving plant legal. If you don't help and it is banned, you may deeply regret it one day when you, or someone important to you, is suffering greatly from chronic pain, anxiety, depression, PTSD, fibromyalgia, or many of the other things that kratom helps with, and you/they do not have access to this natural alternative. Thank you so much for your time. All the best, [REDACTED].

My name is [REDACTED]. I've had a problem with drugs since I was 16 years old. In and out of prison since I've been 20. I recently found out about kratom about 2 years ago. I've become a productive member of society since then. I don't ever want to get high. I finally am on the road to getting custody of my son. Before this time, I'd use everything I could get my hands on to try and maintain my addiction. Now, I don't spend every bit of my money on drugs. I exercise, hang out with friends, actually participate in my life, not just exist. There should be no reason for this plant to be banned. It helps me with social anxiety and ADHD. I've tried over prescription medications for both, and I end up grossly abusing them, and end up in that downward spiral again. I'm afraid that once I end up running out of kratom, with it being banned, I'll head right down that path again. I'm 29 years old and, for the first time in my life, have been successful. It's about to all be taken away. I can see why heroin is a scheduled drug, it destroys lives, I'm yet to find someone who had their life made WORSE by taking kratom!! - [REDACTED]

I am a thirty-four year old U.S. Army veteran. I have been married for over eleven years and have two children. I have been using Kratom in place of opiates the VA hospital prescribed. I do not get "high". I do feel a slight energy boost. I also feel relaxed because the pain in my back is not overwhelming. I suppose that if Kratom is made illegal I will still try to find it. So then this U.S. veteran of two tours in support of OIF will become a felon. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

I am a 29 year old logistics coordinator. For the past 10 years I have struggled to work because of pain, mostly in my back, but other places as well. I always thought it was because I was heavy, so I lost weight. I was still in pain. I tried to get into better shape, exercising most days of the week; gritting my teeth through body wide muscular pain. Every day. I was diagnosed with many acute conditions, many times. Pulled muscles, tendinitis, bursitis, TMJ. I went to physical therapy for my hands, my back, and my feet. I saw a chiropractor. I was placed on many medications, such as steroids, anti inflammatories, muscle relaxers, and antidepressants. Xrays showed narrowing of my spine, but nothing could explain the constant and continuous pain everywhere else. The word 'fibromyalgia' has been thrown around, but the suggested treatment is just more of the same. I was told about kratom in a back pain support group. People were always talking about their pills, usually narcotics. What symptoms get you what prescriptions, etc. It was a sad place to be. I ordered kratom, completely skeptical, out of desperation. As I stood in my bedroom, crying over a pile of laundry that I couldn't fold, I placed my first order with overnight shipping. CAN YOU IMAGINE BEING IN TOO MUCH PAIN TO FOLD A TSHIRT? Kratom has picked up where medicine left off. There was nothing else the medical profession could offer me. I'm still under medical care, and I still receive regular check ups, blood work, and occasionally physical therapy. I still have pain, but I am working and living again. I'm active. I cannot imagine going back to crying over laundry again. It's simply unimaginable to be left with a life like I was living. It wasn't worth living. Sincerely, [REDACTED], MA

I am a 35 year old female. Fitness and health is my life. I started using kratom about three months ago. It is the only substance that gets rid of my monthly menstrual cramps, it relieves severe PMS and I use it for pain management related to workouts. I also have found it to be the best substance I have ever used for anxiety, and social anxiety. I am not a drug user, I am very healthy and I run obstacle races for fun. I am currently attending grad school for herbal medicine to earn a master's degree in science. Kratom is what gave me the motivation to start this endeavor. I do not depend on kratom to live, but kratom enhances my

life greatly. I am truly my best self on kratom. I am focused, determined and resilient naturally and kratom brings out the best of those qualities.

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm a 46 year old Father from [REDACTED] MI and I'd like to voice my concern.

Kratom has helped me control my anxiety and depression disorder to a great degree and has helped me to completely stop my use of alcohol any illicit drugs and lose 40 pounds. My doctor is impressed with my progress and the fact that my blood pressure is now in the healthy range also due to kratom use. In fact it is better than it was when I was in my 20's. My life is much more stable for myself and my children now thanks to it after over a year of responsible use. It is as safe as coffee and abuse potential is non existent, the worse that can happen if too much is taken is that you will get sick and may vomit..

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important medicinal uses and has changed my life, so I'm asking you to please help stop this bill. Please do not try to Schedule this drug until more research can take place, this is in no way a synthetic or dangerous substance and has safely been used by Buddhist monks for thousands of years.

Please do not fall prey to the propaganda, such as deaths and getting "high" that have been put out by Pharmaceutical companies that will lose the deadly grip they have on the American population with deadly and addictive opioids and other drugs.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 37 year old chronic illness/rare disease patient, a wife, daughter, sister and mother of 3. I started having life altering symptoms at the age of 18 and slowly declined over a decade before I received a correct diagnosis. At that point I was pretty much bedridden, had missed out on my young adult life, isolated myself from friends and most importantly, my husband and children missed "ME".

My condition is endocrine so I can't choose alternatives for the bodies master hormones I must replace to stay alive. Patients with my condition are often left weak, severely fatigued, unmotivated and lacking the overall feeling of well-being. Synthetic hormones (prescription) can only do so much. Research has shown that Ritalin and antidepressants can help us. I tried many antidepressants and stimulants but didn't feel like myself and hated the side effects.

I found Kratom in 2012 and immediately felt better. I was happier, I no longer needed to nap 3 times a day, I had the strength and energy to play with my children and most importantly I felt as close my old self as I will get. I have used the same strain and dosage for at least 4 years. Without Kratom I'll end up back in bed sleeping my life away. My husband will pick up the slack, my children will miss their mom (my youngest is 15 months) and I'll have to live my life wishing others wouldn't hurt if I were just put out of my misery.

I had more faith in our government. I feel like I'm in another less fortunate country or a bad dream. Please don't take away the one thing that helps so many and harms so few (if any). I want to remain a productive member of society. I shouldn't be FORCED onto disability.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 61 years old. I am a wife, a mother, a friend, a grandmother, a Christian, and I take kratom. No one chooses to live a life in chronic pain. I am not gifted with words, as a matter of fact, my illness often makes it difficult to put my thoughts clearly. But for this life giving, gentle herb, I will attempt to tell my story.

In 1992 I thought I had suffered a work related injury. Repetitive actions lead to pain that quite often made it impossible to work. Later it was determined that I have fibromyalgia, and a host of back and neck issues. I wish I could name them all. Years of doctor visits, following every instruction the various doctors gave me from medications to massage, physical therapy, acupuncture, I was finally told there was nothing more that could be done. Everyday was, and is, one lived in pain. Until I found kratom. It was briefly mentioned in a fibromyalgia support group. Taking it has been a Godsend. With narcotics, the pain never stopped. Yet with kratom, I have days that I forget that I have these illnesses. It truly has been a miracle for me. I have always lived my life "naturally". Choosing organic foods, dietary supplements, etc. Being careful what I put in my body. I take kratom in its powdered form, mixing it with a bit of orange juice. Within moments, the pain is gone. I have no side effects with kratom, only pain relief and the thrill of living my life again. I have been able to go for walks and even hikes with my husband, cook again, clean house--simple things that most take for granted. Please help me continue to live my life productively and healthily. Please help us stop, or delay the ban on kratom in the US.

My name is [REDACTED] & I'm 46 years old. I've suffered from depression my entire life. At 15 I was prescribed ritalin along with prozac. By the time I reached my 21st birthday I was a full blown alcoholic addicted to a host of prescription medications. Suicidal thoughts loomed through my head daily nevermind the fact that I now had a marriage and a baby. I made countless visits to a psychiatrist and doctors only to be PRESCRIBED MORE MEDICATION THAT DID NOT WORK.

In 2005 I found myself desperate for change and I quit everything cold turkey! The next 6 years were a fog and I found myself sleeping all day with no quality of life. I found kratom through much research. The results for me taking kratom were out of bed, out of pain, and the depression was at bay finally! For the first time in my life I was happy & productive part of society. I've been taking kratom since 2011 and NOTHING ELSE! If the ban goes through I will eventually go back into a depression and be in physical and emotional pain. I vaguely remember my life without kratom but now expected to deal with the ban from a tree leaf. I don't want to go back to that life but I know myself well enough that all the old symptoms of depression will come back. Life without kratom means a life with depression because i will not go back to the men in white coats for their laboratory pills when my creator has left me a leaf to take care of all of it! My inherent right!

I'm a 51 year old woman living with Fibromyalgia, Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy and other conditions. I use kratom for chronic pain and it gives me great relief that prescription pain meds don't offer.

I'm a 47 year old wife, Mom and Grandma. I use kratom to help with my RSD, Depression, Anxiety, insomnia, nerve pain, herniated disks, PTSD, social anxiety, muscle spasms, arthritis, chronic fatigue and regulating my blood pressure. I was on countless pharmaceuticals and endured painful injections on a regular basis and it didn't help any. With pharmaceuticals I was unable to function and became a zombie. There's about 2 ½ years that I don't remember much of because of all the meds they had me on. I started searching for an alternative that was less harmful for my body and state of mind. I've tried many things and kratom is the one that works best for me. It is the only thing that helps with the nerve pain. My overall health and state of mind improved dramatically. I have been taking kratom for over 2 ½ years now and I can't imagine life without it. It allows me to control my pain and gives me the energy to get up and moving. I sleep way better and my thought have become more positive. It doesn't leave me in a fog or high at all. It actually clears my head and allows me to function somewhat "normal". Before I found kratom I had lost all hope and the burning pain was eating me alive. I would lay curled up in ball crying and wishing for death. Kratom gave me my life back! The prospect of returning to that state is absolutely terrifying! I love where I live, my family is here. But if I lose kratom we are seriously considering moving out of the country. I shouldn't have to choose between my health and my home. I have seen kratom help people get off of dangerous drugs and regain control of their life. I have seen it help with chronic migraines, Fibromyalgia, Lyme Disease, Addiction, ADHD, depression, anxiety and so much more! And it is safe. You take too much you puke. And it tastes gross so the kids won't want to get into it and if they

do, I'm confident it won't hurt them, unlike dangerous pharmaceuticals. My body responds better to plant medicine and I choose kratom. Please don't take my quality of life away by allowing this ban to go through.

My friend just got back on Adderall for anxiety because of this ban. Within a week she passed out while driving and totalled her car and got a DUI for driving on prescription medication. Kratom never did this to her

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 35 year old father of two young children I work full time and live with my partner, the mother of my two children. I have been on one medication or another since I was 14. I also starting drinking and drugging around that age. I have suffered from severe depression and social anxiety as well as temporal lobe epilepsy. For many years I drank very heavily since no medication I was prescribed ever worked for me. I couldn't hold jobs, I got in trouble with the law, I was a degenerate basically. I also became addicted to opiates around the age of 21 and this led to many many years of struggling with my addiction. I was a true blue drug fiend, shooting whatever I could find into my vein and doing any substance I could get my hands on. I was a legit danger to society with no cares but to get high and get there quick. My struggle resulted in me losing both my children and my partner I ended up on the streets shooting heroin, smoking crack and suicidal. In the past two years I have been able to get off the streets, get off of all hard drugs/prescriptions got my family back together, get an apartment, get a car, thrive in my workplace (a cook at the head of a line in a very busy restaurant) and combat my depression and anxiety. Without a strong, loving and supportive partner, and Kratom, none of this would be possible. I am not willing to let this plant go without a hell of a fight. It is a life saver. And trust me IT DOESN'T GET YOU HIGH. I WOULD KNOW!

I started taking Kratom for Depression and anxiety. I was on pharmaceutical antidepressants for 25 years and still was not living a happy life. I was actually miserable and couldn't care less about life. Even with prescription drugs, I would not shower or brush my teeth, sometimes for weeks! I was beautiful yet didn't care that I was rotting in a mental prison that was physically paralyzing.

In November 2015, a friend suggested that I try Kratom to help with my depression. I can't even begin to tell you what Kratom has done for me....It has given me a life that I used to dream about, a life that never existed for me, a life that I thought I could never have! 2015/2016 has been THE BEST YEAR OF MY LIFE, I have traveled, reconnected with family and friends, began living a healthy lifestyle of Clean eating, exercise and spiritual well being! None of the prescription pills ever brought me this close to happiness. Big Pharma and Doctors have had 25 years to get it right..they FAILED ME. Now it's my turn to get it right...AND I DID!

Since word of the ban on Kratom, I decided to finish up what little bit I had in preparation for the Scheduling. I did not taper down, I did it cold turkey. I had no withdrawals, no cravings and no suffering. I'm sad to say, day 4 without Kratom. I quickly returned to my natural state, staring into space, completely disconnected, expressionless and exhausted, while being TRAPPED in the memories of such a great year and FEARING I will never experience life like that again. I do not have to live this way, I've found a plant that changes my existence for the better..This is MY LIFE THAT I'M TALKING ABOUT and IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT I'M HAPPY!

I deserve better for myself and I have found better for myself but as of October 1st 2016, I will either be a criminal or severely depressed. I ask that you consider ME and my well being when you choose to support or oppose keeping Kratom legal. Please sign the Pocan/Salmon Dear Colleague letter! - [REDACTED]

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 3:07:14 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 42 year old professional from (b) (6) I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have several health issues that compelled me to look at alternative medications. I have fibromyalgia, diabetes, anxiety and all the issues that come along with these types of alignments.

I was and am still concerned about reliance on pain medication. I have several prescriptions for pain and anxiety. I knew using these meds on a daily basis would lead to a dependence and high tolerances, which would require more and more medications. In searching for alternative medications I came across Kratom. It has helped me manage my pain and anxiety as well as contributed to getting my blood sugars lower. I believe that keeping this miracle plant from those that need it, would be detrimental to other's quality of life. I have never had an addiction to any substance and I would like to keep it that way.

I have found Kratom to be a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. With further research I think Kratom could be used in many different ways to help so many people. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6), MBA

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:01:37 PM

DR. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) I am forty eight years old. I could tell you my whole story and I will if you would like to contact me. I am a statistic, I am former opioid user due to the medical industry. My drug dealer was a doctor. I was lucky I caught my addiction before it ruined my life. Kratom has had a huge positive impact on my life. I am able to manage the pain that I still have without opiates, and added side effect the plant helps with my PTSD from the untimely death sixteen year old son and an anxiety disorder I have dealt with my whole life. This herb is a game changer for I am in control of my life not a pill bottle. Your finding are false I have many times stopped and started the consumption of Kratom without any adverse side effect.

I strongly urge you to reconsider your ban on Kratom. If the government truly want to wage war against the opioid epidemic Kratom is your best weapon. I have seen numerous people winning that war in there personal lives due to this plant.

Thank You

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:36:41 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a 41 year old decorated and retired law enforcement officer. I was retired out of law enforcement due to an on-duty work related injury to my lower back (L4-L5). I am in a constant state of chronic pain and I find very little relief from most anything. I was prescribed hydrocodone 7.5-325 and told to take one every 6 hours for pain. Often times these pills have terrible side effects, but they were all that helped for pain.

During a trip back to (b) (6) I was unable to continue my pain care for the 6 month stay. I was in constant pain and had difficulty getting things done that I needed to get done.

Out of desperation, I began searching herbal remedies for pain. That's when I discovered Kratom. I ordered Kratom and gave it a shot.

It works!

It does NOT make you "high". It does not alter your consciousness like the pain medication can do. It does not have addictive properties. And there are no withdrawal effects as there are when stopping narcotic pain medicine.

There is plenty of material written by Doctors and Attorneys on the medicinal value of Kratom. This is a SAFE alternative to those of us who do not wish to take narcotic addictive pain medications. Without Kratom as an option, my quality of life drastically declines. I find it difficult to get things done, and living in a constant state of pain is mentally draining as much as physically draining.

I have always been a healthy person who takes very good care of my body. I would not put any drug like substance into my body that altered my mind in the manner many of these false claims about Kratom make. It is beyond frustrating to read these false narratives and it is also clear to me that there are only two reasons these claims are made: 1) Pure ignorance and lack of research 2) Political agenda to control an effective, harmless alternative for profit; at the expense of the people who suffer from chronic pain.

I've read many false claims from pharmaceutical financed companies (and government officials) that Kratom is like, or worse than, heroin. This is shameful and untruthful. For centuries Kratom has never been the cause of death - other drugs were found in every case Kratom came up in an autopsy. Furthermore, as I discovered the hard way, taking too much Kratom just makes one feel nauseous, and it is much less effective for pain. Less is more with Kratom.

We all know the pharmaceutical industry does not want competition; and we all know they have been trying to use Kratom to market it and profit off it because it is so effective.

I no longer can afford health insurance. I can not afford to see Doctors, get massage, get acupuncture, or even pay for medication. Kratom is a cheap, effective, natural option for me and I would hate to see politics take away this herb from those of use who benefit so greatly from it.

It's time people stop being punished by big corporations and over-reaching government all for selfish financial and political gain.

Please reconsider the untruthful and outrageous attacks on this herbal alternative that has so many positive qualities. Stop taking away safe and effective herbal treatments from those of us who are suffering.

I would be happy to speak more with anyone willing to listen.

Please stop the war on Kratom!

Thank you,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 10:06:01 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 50 years old female from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have been battling depression for 40+ years and have been on antidepressants for 30+ years. I have tried every pill that has been produced with minimal effects. I was on the highest dose of Celexa which is the only antidepressant that did not have major negative effects on me. I tried Kratom from the urge of a friend who stated she had remarkable success with no negative effects. I tried it with huge success. I had no negative side effects, better results than what I received on Celexa and this is all natural.

The fact that this is being taken away from the public is sad. Considering the wonderful results that thousands of people have had. The only negativity is the big pharmaceuticals cannot make money on this. The amount of money I pay for my prescriptions is ridiculous. The fact that most are not even being covered by my medical coverage or the cost is higher every year. I do not want to back slide on the positive effects on my life with a small dosage of Kratom. I have not had to take any other prescriptions for any other symptoms either. No pain, increase in energy and I am able to live my everyday life with zest I have not felt in a very long time.

Getting older I have noticed a loss in energy, strength, and the fact that minimal work can cause muscle pain. Kratom fixed this for me. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 4:26:32 PM

My name is (b) (6) I am 48 years old I'm from (b) (6).
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was hopelessly struggling with opiate addiction until I discovered kratom two and a half years ago. It saved my life and continues to be a part of my everyday routine. I would be lost without it. I no longer take pain medication and have a productive and full life. Not the case 18 months ago. My life became unmanageable and unbearable. It would be a travesty to no longer be able to use it. It's truly a miracle for me.

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 7:49:23 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 11:24:29 PM

I have severe depression. Doctors tried everything and nothing worked. I would have probably committed suicide if not for kratom. Kratom saved my life.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:25:15 PM

I am a responsible adult-disabled veteran who uses kratom Occasionally. It is an extremely beneficial substance especially for those suffering from chronic pain and want to avoid the use of opiates. Please reconsider your stance as it will only hurt people and ironically cause more opioid deaths-and oddly the DEA understood that fact,And change their stance due to the over whelming public outcry which I hope is happening again! Please Regulate it with common sense guidelines but keep it legal- please -thanks for your consideration (b) (6)
Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 2:07:47 PM

I use Kratom. It keeps me out of the Doctors office and away from addictive drugs. I suffer pain from numerous surgeries. Kratom is not addictive. Helps me with any anxiety with no medication.

I have a much better quality of life. Please. I could go on and on.

Please reconsider the science behind Kratom.

Thanks

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 2:38:10 PM

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions, that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I don't understand why, especially in the midst of an opioid crisis, a natural and safe alternative to pharmaceuticals has been made illegal in some states. It says to me that even though doctors over-prescribed dangerous, addictive, and deadly drugs, the onus is on the patients. Dr. Phil regularly berates these people on his show, but I don't think I've ever seen him host a doctor or a pharmaceuticals rep, and kick *their* butts across the stage- metaphorically speaking, of course. Now, because of a crisis caused by institutions, people in pain can no longer get relief. My friend has taken the exact same dose of Ativan for anxiety and Tramadol for pain for many years; never once used either of them recreationally, but now because of the epidemic has been completely cut off. Fortunately, she has a friend in Mexico but that isn't sustainable. What is she supposed to do?

So, here's my breakdown of the situation:

1. Doctors over-prescribe dangerous, addictive, deadly drugs for pain.
2. A huge number of Americans get hooked on said drugs because they weren't educated about the risks of said drugs.
3. When they run out of their prescriptions, they turn to street drugs like heroin.
4. Thousands of Americans overdose daily.
- 5 The American Medical Association reports new guidelines for treating pain.
6. Doctors suddenly cut patients off of the pharmaceuticals.
7. Still no education for the patients, but now they're "junkies"; blamed for their addictions; addiction treatment commercials air regularly; Dr. Phil has addicts on his show and blames/berates them for their addictions.
8. Millions of Americans are in pain. There's a natural plant remedy called kratom, but the DEA & FDA want to make it illegal.
9. Many Americans in pain turn to street drugs like heroin; Thousands of Americans overdose daily.

Do you see how this- completely cutting people off of pharmaceuticals but making the kratom plant illegal, while research and personal anecdotes *prove* that it's perfectly safe, effective, and even helps addicts quit!!- will be a never-ending cycle, resulting in more and more deaths? How can anyone get better when the things that help aren't available or are only available illicitly? I implore you: promote kratom, don't criminalize it!

Thank you very much for your time.

(b) (6)

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 2:43:37 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 35 year old woman from (b) (6) I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was introduced to Kratom through a very close friend who suffers with chronic back and leg pain. I myself, have arthritis and PTSD. I've had pain all my life in my joints. One of my hips does not sit in the socket like it's suppose to. Which causes the muscles from my ankle all the way up to my neck to shift and deform to cater to the odd position. I can not take the standard prescribed pain medicines. I have serious adverse reactions from them, causing me to be unable to do anything until they are completely out of my system. I also can not take standard medicines prescribed for my PTSD. Any strong medicine, including strong antibiotics, my body will have serious adverse effects from. I use herbal supplements to successfully treat my PTSD symptoms. But until my friend had introduced me to kratom, I had suffered in pain for years silently. The physical therapy I did, helped with range of motion, but did nothing to relieve the painful episodes.

While (b) (6) is a progressive state in the area of alternative medicines (medical marijuana), they have made it almost impossible to be apart of the program. I urge you to read these articles on the subject. As you can see (b) (6) is having an almost opposite effect as other states who've embraced medical marijuana. I have 2 conditions that would qualify for this program, but unfortunately due to the expense of qualifying and difficulty finding a Dr on board with the program, it is not an option for me.

<http://www.startribune.com/few-minnesotans-sign-up-for-medical-marijuana/309063941/>
<http://www.startribune.com/pain-patients-make-up-half-of-minnesota-s-medical-marijuana-program/400329891/>
<http://www.twincities.com/2017/05/15/minnesotas-medical-marijuana-providers-have-lost-a-combined-11-million/>

Kratom has been the only pain relieving tool I've found that I can use as needed and doesn't give me debilitating side effects. I have been taking it for painful episodes as needed for over 6 months. My husband uses the mood stabilizing strains for his severe Bipolar disorder. Which has been out of control for most of his life. He has taken every prescribed med out there for his symptoms. They either left him in a zombie like trance or didn't help at all. Since he started taking kratom his moods have stabilized. We can safely say that his bipolar is successfully being controlled! Something he's never been able to say since his diagnosis in the early 2000's. He is happily holding down a full time job and being the husband and father he always knew he could be, but because of the bipolar, he had not been.

Bipolar disorder affects approximately 5.7 million adult Americans. People with bipolar are often prescribed very strong, habit forming drugs to help ease their symptoms. People with bipolar are significantly more at risk for abusing such medicines. It is generally a painful and debilitating

experience trying to find the right med or combination of meds that help with bipolar symptoms. Often taking several years to achieve or, in about a quarter of the cases, the desired treatment is never achieved. This method of constantly changing medications and dosages almost always leads to undesired affects such as, suicide attempts or completion and full on psychotic episodes. We've publicly seen the horrific outcome of full on bipolar psychotic episodes in recent years. I strongly believe this whole frustrating process can be avoided if kratom was suggested as a good option for those who suffer with bipolar disorder.

I understand the main concern is abuse of kratom and the deaths that have been publicized through the media. 36 deaths over 10 years equates to statistically zero. With a lot of those deaths being caused by a mixture of other strong medicines along with the kratom. Are you aware that almost 15,000 deaths have occurred due to legally prescribed opioids from the years 2000-2016? Now any medicine, be it man made or god given, has the same potential to be abused. As we've learned already, even "non-addictive" medicines have been openly abused throughout the years. I can tell you that myself and my husband have never experienced a "high" from kratom. Not one time. Neither of us have experienced withdrawals if we do not take it. My husband has had to deal with some severe withdrawal symptoms from the bipolar medications he's been prescribed over the years. No desires to keep increasing dosage. No panic at the thought of running out. It has just been a pain relieving, mood stabilizing blessing in our lives. I do, however, agree that more research needs to be done on this wonderful plant.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 3:00:28 PM

Commissioner-

I am a responsible adult with friends who use Kratom to improve their health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 3:49:44 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

I want to respond to your remarks about Kratom; I have been consuming Kratom responsibly for 3 years now and it has completely changed my life.

I have multiple back problems and was on opioid medications for a while, I got addicted and couldn't kick it completely.

I was relapsing and explaining to a friend that I either get addicted again and not feel pain or be in pain and have no relief. He introduced me to Kratom, no withdrawals from opioids, no negative side effects, and I function better through out my day. You're attempting to take away that for me based on a study you've conducted over a short amount of time compared to my 3 years. I've helped friends and family move away from illegal drugs and prescription pain killers some of stayed with Kratom while, others used it for what they needed and moved on.

Listing 36 overdose deaths from Kratom is a lie, isn't it true that they also had other substances in their systems?

How many tens of thousands of deaths take place every year from prescription pain killers?!

I would take a wager and say that more people die from acetaminophen overdoses than they do from kratom.

Stop towing the line for the pharmaceutical industry. Stay out of my life and my body.

I am responsible enough to understand what IS and ISN'T harmful to me.

V/r

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:29:55 PM

Dear sir: I have used kratom for two years to manage pain caused by arthritis. I usually take about 3-5 grams (1-2 tsps) per day, though the amount can vary as needed. Twice over the last two years, I have had two-week periods where I wasn't using kratom, and did not suffer any withdrawal or cravings. Before using kratom, I had to take a cocktail of prescription pain medications including tramadol (which IS habit-forming), cylobenzaprine and meloxicam. I have been able to quite using all three since kratom works just as well. The reports of using it to get high are misleading since the amount required for that makes you nauseous as well. Please do not proceed with scheduling kratom as an "opioid analogue". The true science shows it isn't and you deprive consumers of a valuable and inexpensive means of controlling pain. Thank you for considering my input into the matter.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom a possible cure for an epidemic
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:44:11 AM

Hello my name is (b) (6) and I just want too briefly express how kratom has benefited my life all around. Keeping things short I've had a history of nerve pain since I was in my late teens up too today(26). I've had small spurts of pain killer use in my past for relief and normalcy. With kratom I was able too find the right roa that worked for me specifically. I take it a few times a week when my nerves flare up before work or sleep, and benefit amazingly from it's properties and the way they specifically effect me. I also benefit socially and can focus on important task like school or other priorities when I take it. I feel like I would still be struggling with finding relief in different ways if it wasn't for kratom. With kratom I have no urges too drink or use any other pain relief substances when I have flare ups. It really has been a god send for me and I ask that the FDA humbly reconsider their stance on kratom for people like me that use it responsibly and could possibly be facing addiction and other complications if not for kratom. Many will say it's just another addiction but for me and so many others it's much more than that. It's our normalcy way of life back. I could go way more introspective into my personal viewpoints on kratom but im sure you have heard it all. Thank you for your time!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:55:42 PM

To whomever this may concern,

This is (b) (6) and I'm a 30 year old wife and mother. Two years ago, after countless neurologists, podiatrists, orthopedists, blood draws, diagnostic images, etc., I was diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome. Prior to this disease, I was an active mother. My husband worked so many hours, that my daughter and I spent all of our time going on hikes and adventures. It all came to a crashing halt when I got sick. It took so long to diagnose me, that months went by where I couldn't walk without the most excruciating pain ever. I lost my freedom, I lost the ability to play with my kid, to do the most simple tasks. The doctors prescribed me the Fentanyl patch and Oxycodone for breakthrough pain. I took both for about 6 months before I noticed how depressed I had become. The medicines made me angry, depressed, and affected my mind in the most negative way possible. I knew I had to find an alternative. I found Kratom. I've been on it responsibly for a year now. My dosage always stays the same, unlike doctor prescribed opioids I was on. I take it 3 times a day, and if I feel like I am becoming tolerant, I switch to a different strain. I never up my dosage. I never have to take more. It lasts for about 4-5 hours and it eases my pain better than any prescription pain killers ever did. It does not make me depressed, it does not make me angry, and it does not cause you to feel like you're struggling for oxygen. Kratom saved my life. I can do more with Kratom than I ever could with Fentanyl. I've gotten my life back and I'd be devastated if I had to go back to the doctor. Please address this issue with compassion, with an open mind, and with logic. When comparing Kratom vs Opiates, which one kills more? The answer is obvious. If Kratom is banned there will be countless people going back to drugs that were ruining them. There will be people who can't cope and there will be many lives lost if Kratom is taken away, lives who could've been saved if this ban does not take effect.

Regards,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom call to action
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 6:25:29 AM

Stop killing us!

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom for aging joggers
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:18:40 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

I'm 68, take a teaspoon of kratom now instead of my 2nd cup of coffee, and find it no more habituating than tea or coffee when doing without it. Taking more than twice that is nauseating for me, a strong self-limiting quality.

Still jogging (3 miles in 27.5 minutes) I find it reduces arthritic pain somewhat, increases blood flow, and I recommend it to other aged joggers.

Please consider this recent Controlled Substances Act (CSA) 8-factor study of kratom...

Pinney Associates' Scientific Abuse Potential Assessment of Kratom Finds Evidence of Public Health Benefit and Little Harm.

"It's important to understand that although kratom has some mild effects similar to opioids, its chemical make-up is different, and it appears overall much safer, with apparently relatively small effects on respiration. In fact, kratom's analgesic effects and impact on energy, combined with its favorable safety profile supports continued access by consumers to appropriately regulated kratom products while research on its uses continues."

http://www.pinneyassociates.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/20170118-Henningfield-Kratom-8-Factor-Press-Release.v.Final_.pdf

the study... <http://www.pinneyassociates.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Kratom-8-Factor-by-PinneyAssoc-11.28.16.pdf>

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom is a Good Thing
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:54:26 PM

At 60 years old kratom and vitamins have essentially eliminated my symptoms from fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue and chronic treatment resistant depression, none of which were being reduced with meds from the VA, and as a side bonus my blood pressure and prediabetes has normalized. I can now continue to work at my fairly strenuous weekend job at (b) (6) that I was about to give up
Check with my Dr. (b) (6) .

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S8, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM IS SAVING MY LIFE
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 10:19:09 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 27 year old man from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I found out about kratom's effects online while searching for alternatives to get off of the oxycodone i was prescribed and became heavily addicted to.

(b) (6) was in an apartment fire. I had no other option but to jump from 3 stories after getting lost in the darkness. I lost my wife in this darkness and she was not able to make her way out, dying from smoke inhalation. I suffered a severe pilon fracture in my left foot from my jump as well as smoke inhalation injuries and burns from the fire itself.

I have had several surgeries in this foot now and will never walk the same again. I will also never be the same again mentally due to the trauma. While I am thankful to be alive, it is not easy to cope with the loss of my wife and the loss of quality of life due to the pain I suffer daily. Oxycodone has been the only pain medication to keep my foot out of pain and after being on it for months I had become heavily addicted and began to fear for my life due to it's dangers. That is of course until I found KRATOM. A NATURAL remedy to my pain that is giving me my life back. I have been able to eat this plant in the morning and walk pain free for hours and hours. I was able to give up pharmaceutical drugs for a natural herb!

I am able to treat my foot pain and the depression from the loss of my wife daily from this plant. I am begging you to reconsider and invest in studying this plant so myself and millions of others can continue to live our lives pain free and in better states of mind.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, including my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Legal
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 4:13:31 AM

I, (b) (6) from (b) (6) would like to voice my opinion on keeping the natural, non-dangerous plant, Kratom, Legal in the USA.. It is legal in many countries because it is proven to be beneficial & non-harmful to human beings. Therefore, it is our human right to have access to this plant. One cannot get "high" from Kratom either.

Furthermore, there are countless people depending on it, to make it through each day, when traditional pain medicines have not worked for them. Many of these pain pills have created much more problems for people to deal with. It has not been proven that Kratom has solely killed anyone. The death cases were always of people who were taking various other medications at the same time, which is a proven fact. Let us count the deaths from Tylenol or other similar drugs per year. It is a giant number! Why are these actual drugs not scrutinized ??

Do not let greed win in this day and age. Allowing more natural medicine available is evolution, while the reverse is de-evolution. Marijuana has finally become more legal & accepted for helping people, and Kratom has less negative effects than this. There is no scientific evidence showing that kratom is dangerous, addictive, or harmful in anyway..

Please do the right thing and keep Kratom LEGAL. Anything else is unjustified..

Thanks, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom research
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 4:52:31 PM

I am (b) (6), im 37 and live in (b) (6). I am very troubled by your findings on the dangers of Kratom. However, while yes if abused can cause nausea, constipation, vomiting, and very slight dependence, Kratom has helped me a lot more than harmed. My personal experience and many others is the opposite of your findings.

I use 3-4 times a day with my coffee, before work, after work and before bed. What I use is just powdered leaf. No concentrations or mixes of illegal drugs or pharmaceuticals. Since 2012 I have had nothing but benefits from this wonder drug. It improves my mood, helps me sleep, regulates my appetite, gives me energy, and helps with pain and anxiety. Yes, it shouldn't be sold to minors and even checked for purity. Please don't take away my right as an American to put into my body a powdered leaf that is related to coffee while I can drink as much alcohol as I like until I die...does that make any sense?

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saved my life...
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:34:43 AM

Good day,

I'm writing you today to share my Kratom story.

I am a 52 year old stay at home mother of 3. 12 years ago, because of depression, physical and emotional pain, I attempted suicide five times. While researching a way to do it successfully, I discovered kratom in a forum with many others just like me. Others had addictions, PTSD, severe anxiety, etc. The one thing we all had in common was desperation. Desperation to find something, anything that worked. Kratom was that one thing.

Kratom gave me back to my kids, my husband, my mother, my friends. 12 years on and I'm still here and will fight for this sacred leaf with everything I have.

Please refer to: (8 Factor Analysis by Dr. Jack Henningfield submitted to the DEA by Pinney and Associates) (Dr. Christopher McCurdy's Study on Addiction) and the list goes on.

I encourage you to read our stories, to read the analyses, the studies, Etc. I ask that you learn about the people a Kratom ban would affect the most. The people whose lives were saved by it, improved by it, and made whole again because of it. I encourage you to learn about the people who owe their very existence to kratom.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)
#iamkratom
#kratomsaveslives

Sent from my Boost Mobile Phone.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saves LIVES! - Please read!
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:03:54 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 33 year old hard working, tax paying, responsible adult from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that since my state alone banned Kratom (overnight without any public hearing) that it changed my life for the worse I attest as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saves lives....please don't keep it from us!
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 4:34:38 PM

Commissioner,

Please consider the number of deaths via opiates has no relevance to Kratom. I'm sure by now you have received a whole lot of emails in support of Kratom. This one will probably never be read. However, I'm compelled to address this issue!

Kratom has been part of my daily routine for almost a year now. I stopped medicating myself via methadone (80mg) after battling an opiate addiction brought on after knee surgery 13+ years ago. I've been a first responder, a private pilot, a farmer, (b) (6) certified law enforcement officer and a father of 3 wonderful adult children. Had I not found "raw Kratom" I never would have survived as I would have surely died using rx meds. Kratom is no more deadly than coffee and I've seem to have 1000's of witnesses to this.

If public well-being is truly your concern, then out law prescription meds, what consume a multitude of lives every minute of ever day! Kratom has been a life saver!

Please keep our Kratom legal and do not allow big-pharma to profit from such a miracle plant!

Thank you!

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saves lives
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 5:11:37 PM

Hi my name is (b) (6) I'm a 35 year old male that suffers from chronic pain due to a pinched nerve and a bulging disc and 2 fused vertebrae in my back. I was on several different meds over the years those being Percocet ,hydrocodone, Flexeril,ibuprofen 800 and roboxin. All to no avail my pain got worse and the meds helped less and less every time I took them. The pain got so bad I couldn't get out of bed some days. 4 years ago I read an article about kratom and decided to give it a try. Within an hour I was up cleaning house and playing with my dogs . This plant gave me new life again I was happier and even got a job working in a mill something which would have been impossible before kratom. I ask that you rescind this maniacal witch hunt over a plant and turn your aggressions towards Suboxone and fentanyl the real opoid epidemic plaguing America.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom supporter
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:05:09 AM

Greetings Commissioner:

My name is (b) (6) and I am 39 years old. Almost 10 years ago I became addicted to opiates after several surgeries to try and correct my painful endometriosis. I hit my bottom only a couple years later and went into a year long treatment program. And I have stayed sober ever since. When I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia 5 years ago I was determined to never use opiates to manage my pain. As my condition has increased, the fear of having to give in to opiates was knocking at my door as the pain got worse. A cousin of mine was a huge advocate of kratom and I asked her a ton of questions. I researched on my own as well and read the cons as well as the pros. What finally swayed me was the hundreds of people I communicated with who were using kratom to help manage their pain. And that in low doses I wouldn't feel high or loopy. Even gabapentin, which I have been taking for years made me feel high at first. I finally took the plunge and purchased some through a reputable vendor. That was a year ago. Kratom has made a huge difference in my life. The pain is still there but manageable. I'm not bound to a pill that makes me feel like I threw my sobriety away. I still have never felt high using it. I have even stopped taking it for a couple weeks and never felt like I was going through withdrawals.

I beseech you to listen to the millions of people who are currently using kratom. To the scientists who are excited about the potential of this plant. Listen to us! I'm begging you! I don't know what I will do if you take kratom away. Please don't put me in a position of having to choose between my sobriety and being able to live a normal productive, TAX PAYING life. I hope you read this. And, again, I pray you listen.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom user
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 11:46:06 AM

To whom it may concern,

As an adult consumer of Kratom, I would like to contact you regarding the possible restriction of its use. This plant is used for several purposes in my life. I am able to control pain without having to rely on opiates, which we know is at an epidemic level, I am also able to become more interactive with my family. I am a 20 year Paramedic and I would say I probably have PTSD from many tragedies that I have seen and been a part of. From literature that is provided, I suffer from depression. I find myself pulling away from those that I love and anti-depressants are not only have dangerous side effects but they can turn you into a numb zombie. Kratom has helped my life and I would hate to see it go away. We all recognize that Big Pharma controls MANY things, I would hate to see that they are able to get rid of something this life changing as well. Thanks you, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 1:34:51 AM

Dr Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 37 year old wife and mother of a 13 year old boy from (b) (6) I have struggled with chronic pain, stemming from an accident in my early twenties, that went untreated for a decade. At the time I was an uninsured, single parent so seeking medical attention wasn't an option. Over the early years after my accident I relied heavily on OTC pain relievers and cannabis for extreme pain. Then I fell in love with and married my amazing husband. Three and a half years ago I was finally able to seek medical attention. There are several spinal issues, rotator cuff and bicep tears, two autoimmune conditions and the cherry on top, severe fibromyalgia. All of this plus years of neglecting my health (no means to see a doctor) I became unable to do basic things like vacuum my house or go grocery shopping. I've tried two antidepressants (Cymbalta & wellbutrin) which seriously affected my emotional well being and stole any control I had over my personality. Those drugs are poison. Then there are the anti inflammatory meds and muscle relaxers which only really helped for the first few months, plus tramadol. Tramadol is the only thing that dulls the sharpness of my pain.. That is until I found kratom. With kratom I am able to be productive! I am able to participate in family activities, I'm able to do housework again, and I'm able to take some of the burden off my husband again. With kratom there is no high, no euphoria, you feel normal. Pain free. There are two plants on this earth that have real promise in helping people in pain, people who are addicted. Cannabis and kratom. Talk to kratom users, talk to cannabis patients. This isn't about getting high, this is about pain relief. Both cannabis and kratom provide pain relief better than any pharmaceutical out there. Please stop the war on patients.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose..

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 5:39:39 PM

I'm a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well being. I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of Kratom as well as all testimonies of people that have and continue to use Kratom for their Benefits

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 6:12:29 PM

Hi. My name is (b) (6). I'm a 57 old woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This put Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering Chronic and Acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroine. It would also prevent further research which, to date has shown Kratom to be effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression, the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I learned about Kratom from a Chronic pain group. I have DDD,DJD, Herniated Disc's in my neck and back along with severe spinal stenosis. I've had neck surgery which has failed. I use to be bed bound because of pain. Thanks to Kratom I have my life back. I'm active again. I can go out clean my house and it's also helped my marriage. Kratom is a safe alternative to Pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and it has changed my life. I'm now a productive member of society. If you have any questions about Kratom please visit:

[Http://www.americkratom.org/](http://www.americkratom.org/)

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 7:52:57 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm 38 years old, I reside in (b) (6)

I have had Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Fibromyalgia along with other major ailments that left me bed ridden. After a decade of antidepressants, Tramadol (for pain) I found Kratom, a natural painkiller and natural tea that eases my symptoms.

Since finding Kratom, I am no longer bedridden, I have a life again! I am a professional, I have a great career. I am a middle class citizen with a family of 5. I have suffered no ill side effects from Kratom after 5 years of using this as a morning tea. I wish to plead with you to keep this legal, taking it away you take all of the progress I have made away, my career, my life! I urge you the individual reading this, if you know someone who suffers as I have to just try it, their life will be changed!

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 1:29:23 PM

I'm writing you today because of the statement the FDA released on Kratom.

I'm a responsible adult who's found the benefits of kratom to be very helpful in my day to day life.

I use Kratom to help with medical needs and hope y'all don't ban a substance that has helped save my life. As well as many people, whom I know.

I've suffered with pain and anxiety and with the help of a small amount of kratom have been able to live a much healthier lifestyle.

Please do the right thing and research kratom and then make an educated decision. If you ban this substance I will suffer for poor choices you will have made, for me.

I appreciate your time and expect the FDA to do the right thing and leave kratom available for me and the millions of others who enjoy its many benefits.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 2:56:26 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), I'm from (b) (6), and 34 years old. I'm writing to you asking to please stop the smear campaign and attack on kratom.

KRATOM HAS SAVED MY LIFE! I suffer from PTSD, major depression, and generalized anxiety disorders. For years I was self medicating with narcotics, It destroyed my life and relationships. It only further aggravated my mental disorders and seriously impacted my health. It wasn't until my sister introduced me to kratom (which she also took to treat her depression and anxiety), that I was able to turn my life around completely. Kratom is the ANSWER for the current opioid crisis.. NOT a part of it! Kratom is natural and safe, there are many scientific studies that prove this, but there is still more to do. I know I have taken kratom every day for over two years without any complications. In fact one of the benefits is it's effect on the immune system, I have not gotten sick at all in over two years. Even when people around me are suffering from colds etc. I never catch it. Kratom is the only reason aside from God, that I was recently able to celebrate 2 years sobriety in September! Kratom has obliterated both my depression and anxiety completely. I now have the best life ever, I'm working as a Veterinary technician, my health is back, and I'm closer to my family and friends than ever before. I fear that if Kratom is made illegal, there will be so many more deaths from people turning back to using actual opiates again..I don't know what I would do without it. If you take kratom away from the thousands of people who's lives have been saved from addiction because of it.. You will be destroying and possibly killing so many..I fear for my life too..I don't want to ever have to use drugs again.. So please keep kratom legal! Thank you for your time, God bless.

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:02:51 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 40-year old Female from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I discovered Kratom when I was at my wits end because I have fibromyalgia and I suffer from chronic headaches as well as anxiety. I use Kratom because I am allergic therefore unable to use the medications for fibromyalgia. I suffer from chronic pain every day. I'm also a nurse so I can not use the pain medications and do my job. I also do not like the way pain medications make me feel, I get ill with them and I can't think right when taking them. With Kratom I can take it in the morning and go to work, no side effects, no withdrawal symptoms. I do not have to take it every day, only on the days that I really need it. My husband also takes kratom, he was on opioids for 4 years with no relief and horrible side effects, and when he would try to come off of them he would be really ill, he started taking Kratom and was able to quit taking opioids and his pain is manageable. He is now able to play with our children and enjoy life. Without this I really feel opioids would have taken his life. Neither one of us have had any withdrawal symptoms and our livers are just fine in fact we just got complete work ups done.

Like I stated I suffer from fibromyalgia, chronic pain, my husband suffers from chronic pain from degenerative disk disease and bulged disks in his neck and back as well as anxiety for us both. We also suffer from insomnia due to the pain. He has been able to quit taking opiates. I have been able to work a full shift without having help back into my house after work. We can live normal lives, play with our children and enjoy life. I also have been able to quit taking my anxiety medication and my decongestants as well. I also have suffered from vertigo for the last 3 years which is now almost completely gone.

Kratom has given us both our lives back, we are no longer living minute by minute based on the amount of pain we are in. Our children now have their parents that are able to play with them. Our children have expressed how much happier they are now that we can play and interact with them every day. Without Kratom my husband would have to begin taking pain medication again and would not be able to do the things he can do now. I would have to have help getting dressed in the mornings and have help getting out of my car after a long shift at work, but most importantly our children would miss out on quality time with their parents.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own husbands. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 8:14:58 AM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb

My name is (b) (6), I am a 54 year old disabled veteran and I quit using opioids for chronic pain from rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia. I quit opioids because I found a safe alternative in Kratom. Unfortunately I will have to use pain management for the rest of my life because of permanent joint, muscle and tissue damage from RA. Kratom is an effective pain reliever and does not cause respiratory depression nor any other adverse side effects. Kratom is also an effective treatment for those who need to stop opioids because they are addicts. In effect, Kratom works and the FDA is putting out false information as well as feeding a hysteria with aid of the media, wrongly portraying this safe plant as something it is not.

I have been using Kratom for 8 months, it helps me to be able to continue exercising, and enables me to continue on with my college education/career change, because of the rheumatoid arthritis, and maintain a 3.8 GPA.

The action by FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, and chronic pain sufferers will have to find another way to treat their pain, perhaps illegal and dangerous harmful drugs. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: (b) (6) Kratom Supporter
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 10:02:32 AM

Good morning,

I am writing you today to let you know while I agree with some of the FDA's recent report you are going in the wrong direction. Scheduling a substance before it is studied creates a huge issue. We have been pushing for CGMP for some time, also consider restricting it to adults over 18 or 21 but don't put a ban on it. I am a chronic migraine sufferer and rely on kratom, I am able to make a glass of tea with zero negative effects instead of taking a triptan that has many side effects. I am a 33 year old male, husband and father of four, I work for one of my states top law firms. I am NOT a drug user, please don't change that.

Thank you for your time,

-(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My Kratom Story
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 3:09:50 PM

Hello

Thank you for taking the time to read my Kratom story. We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6). I am a 44 year old female who has been supplementing with Kratom since June 2016. I am currently a part time realtor but previously, worked in (b) (6) until I wasn't able to work full time. I would like to voice my support for Kratom & supporting chronic pain patients, veterans with PTSD, individuals suffering with mood disorders.

I began using Kratom after seeing it being recommended as a pain relief alternative. I had a spinal fusion (b) (6), that was put above a birth defect. After the fusion, I am not able to put any pressure/weight on my spine. I am not able to sit for more than 10-20 minutes which is why I had to stop working my dream job. What this means is no dinners, no movies, no vacations, very little social life, etc since the surgery. I initially was on Rx pain meds & took them as prescribed. I was having serious nausea, fatigue, vomiting, & dizzy spells which my doctors believed was linked to the Rx pain meds therefore I decided to stop taking them. I went a very LONG year with no pain medication & lots of pain to see if the fatigue, nausea, dizziness, etc would clear up. Unfortunately, it just got worse. I am now being evaluated for MS & have 3 positive Western Blot Lyme Disease tests (CDC positive). I do suffer from Internal Tremors therefore I do likely have a neurological issue that is painful too.

For the last 7 years, my life has been full of pain & sickness. June 2016, I try Kratom & find it beneficial. I am far from pain or sickness free, but it does dramatically help me get thru my day. I do completely understand, it is my responsibility to be responsible with my medications & supplements. I do inform every doctor (General Practitioner, Functional medicine doctor, hematologist, Gastro doctor & naturopath) that I am taking it. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic plus suicides of chronic pain patients & mood disorders/traumas. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. It is very disheartening to feel as a chronic pain sufferer, that we are being abandoned, left to live with horrible pain to save addicts.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Personal appeal; please do not take away Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:04:18 PM

Good afternoon.

My name is (b) (6) I am 25 years old. I suffer from chronic depression, and social anxiety--all professionally diagnosed. I have been dealing with these mental ailments for years--until I found Kratom. Kratom has been essential to me, it has given me back my life; I am a restaurant owner, and I am currently working on my degree in computer science. The aforementioned would not have been possible before. I am confident that if it hadn't found Kratom, my life as it is now would simply not be possible

I, like millions of other Americans, are able to move forward with our lives due to the responsible use of Kratom. I stand with the people of the American Kratom Association, and my fellow Americans--please do not take Kratom away from us.

Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Personal appeal; please do not take away Kratom
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 4:02:35 PM

Good afternoon.

My name is (b) (6) I am 25 years old. I suffer from chronic depression, and social anxiety--all professionally diagnosed. I have been dealing with these mental ailments for years--until I found Kratom. Kratom has been essential to me, it has given me back my life; I am a restaurant owner, and I am currently working on my degree in computer science. The aforementioned would not have been possible before. I am confident that if it hadn't found Kratom, my life as it is now would simply not be possible

I, like millions of other Americans, are able to move forward with our lives due to the responsible use of Kratom. I stand with the people of the American Kratom Association, and my fellow Americans--please do not take Kratom away from us.

Thank you for your time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please don't ban kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 2:14:37 AM

My name is (b) (6), and I'm a retired software developer. Several years ago, I fell off a horse and suffered permanent injuries. I am in moderate-to-severe pain every day, which is worsened by sitting, standing, or walking. I've had joint injections and multiple radiofrequency ablations, and while the ablations have reduced my pain, no procedure thus far has been able to bring it down to a manageable level.

I do not take opiate pain relievers for my condition. In my area, doctors are extremely reluctant to prescribe them, which leaves pain patients like me to suffer.

Kratom gave me my life back. It's such an effective pain reliever that I can eliminate my pain at a low dose that does not make me "high." Because of kratom, I am no longer suffering, and I'm now able to exercise and be more active. People who don't suffer from chronic pain have no idea how lucky they are to be able to do simple things like walk their dog. Because of kratom, I can now walk my dog. I can also sit in a chair and write novels, or do pro-bono software development.

I don't like to think about what my life will be like again if kratom is banned. I'm still working with doctors to try to find a non-drug solution for my problem, but we're exhausting the possibilities, and I fear my condition may be untreatable except with pain medication.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep Kratom Legal
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 7:45:04 AM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb MD,

I am concerned about the Kratom Ban and hope you can help. I have a friend who relies on Kratom daily to perform his job as a Carpenter. The job he does daily is very demanding on the body and he has very painful bad knees. He is over 50 years old and before Kratom he relied on prescription opiates to get through the day and perform at his job. He found himself using more and more of these painkillers as time went on, and was getting less results for the pain in his body. He began to feel trapped in this daily routine and feared he was becoming addicted and feared for his life and the chance he could harm himself trying to get pain relief. As he began researching for a natural pain relief he stumbled upon Kratom and gave it a try. Fortunately, it was his saving grace and he now is pain free without fear of any addictive consequences or the fear of death due to accidental overdose. Kratom is a natural pain reliever and has no ill side effects. Please help keep Kratom legal, it certainly saved my friend from becoming sick and addicted to pharmaceutical drugs, and very well may have saved his life. Thank you ever so much for any help you can provide in this matter.

Sincerely, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please legalize kratom in all states
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 8:03:05 PM

Hello im (b) (6) i live in (b) (6). Kratom is saving my life and keeping me from opiates... Please do not ban kratom i am a responsible adult and kratom helps me be a responsible citizen... Please excuse my writing... Thank u guys so much... Dont ban this miracle life saving plant

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please read my story ,kratom must stay legal
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 2:40:15 PM

My name is (b) (6) , I'm a 41 year old that suffers chronic pain and lupus as well as fibro .

I would like for someone anyone to please listen and consider my story .

Kratom helps millions of people in the same shape as me . I do have tried thousands of different traditional medications that the side effects were horrible and addicting .

I found no relief and was bed bound most of the time . I couldn't go out of my house and visit my son which is in college .

I don't feel high , or not in control . I feel like I am actually human again .

Please do not make this illegal to consume .

I am have never been addictive to drugs .

I have always been a law abiding citizen . I have tried to always make the right decisions in all aspects of life and I truly feel taking this all natural plant from millions of people would be detrimental to many chronic pain patients .

Please I plead do not take away my right as a responsible adult to help myself .

Thank you for your time ,

(b) (6)
Email- (b) (6) @yahoo.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Reconsider Banning Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 7:56:03 PM

Dear Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 29-year old mother from (b) (6) .
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I use kratom for debilitating pain that I suffer from Fibromyalgia. Without Kratom I would be on drugs such as Lyrica and Tramadol which have many negative side effects and are addictive, especially Tramadol, much more so than Kratom.

I can now play with my children and function as a normal human being thanks to Kratom.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, I have lost family members to those horrid drugs. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6) [@gmail.com](#)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please reconsider
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 12:29:34 PM

Hello. Ten years ago i had a disk in my neck fused and was left in terrible pain. Given vicodin oxycontin on to fyntnol my life was very bleak. I became very dependent apathetic and lazy. I dropped out of college lost my job. My addiction continued to hijack my mind and I was not my self. No job no ambition nothing. I went on to methadone which was just as terrible in it's own way. I slept my life away. Finally went to rehab and kicked it all. Apon my returning I was still in significant pain taking Tylenol rotating asprin etc. I felt sick a lot. I found Kratom and it has taken the majority of my pain to a to labral place. I hve my life back. I am a productive citizen agian a good mother and wife. I care again. Kratom helped me as nothing eles could. I tried every thing too. Kratom has litterally given me my life back. Banning this herbal remedie will destroy many lives. Please consider peoples lives. This is very important to us.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please review your stance on kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:09:39 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 31-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about kratom from a "stop drinking" support group on the internet.

Since taking kratom, I have stopped my problem drinking and some other negative habits that were having a major impact on my personal life.

I fear that without kratom, I will find myself back in the same spot I was in before discovering this plant, and will lose my quality of life I have now.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

 (b) (6)

=====

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Re: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 12:10:41 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 38 year old husband and father. Two years ago I used kratom to successfully wean myself off pharmaceutical opiates. I heard about kratom from an online group and it really worked for me. Today, I still enjoy kratom occasionally (a few times a month). I'm very disappointed in the smear campaign against kratom I see played out in the media. It's helped me out tremendously and I really hope it won't become illegal. Thanks for your service. Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Reconsider the Kratom Ban. My experience.
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 2:20:59 PM

Dear FDA,

My name is (b) (6) . I'm 22 years old and from San (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign.

I've suffer from many diagnosed mental illnesses including ADHD, Depression and Anxiety and have experienced these conditions for my entire life.

When the recession devastated our country my parents lost their jobs. Since then we've had many financial set backs. One setback was we lost our health insurance, and are still currently not covered. This meant my family couldn't afford to pay for the medication and treatment that I needed. The pharmaceutical drugs that I was prescribed in the past never fully treated my ailments and in some circumstances made my conditions far worse. If I took medication for my Depression I would then have to take anti-nausea medication. If I took my ADHD medication I would lose my appetite and also suffer from insomnia. It was a chain reaction and there were always negative side effects from taking my meds. It was a constant battle. Since my parents couldn't afford the treatment that I needed, I had to search for alternative and herbal medications. After many years of searching for the right herbal medication I started taking Kratom. Its been almost a year ago now and I have only experienced positive benefits.

In a 1oz bag of Kratom there is roughly 30 teaspoon (the minimum dosage). This amount is all I need to treat ALL of my conditions. Keep in mind an oz of Kratom costs me \$5. This means treating my health conditions is not a financial deficit or a concern. To hear that Kratom may be removed from my life is very terrifying. I am afraid that I won't be able to treat my conditions if the FDA bans Kratom.

When I started college, I experienced the most life threatening cases from my health conditions. Kratom helped me face and over come these conditions. I have a year left before I graduate. I fear that a ban on Kratom would impede me from finishing school.

In conclusion, I have only experienced positive effects from Kratom and I swear by its medical proprieties. There are many people like me out there that would also suffer a great deal if Kratom was banned. I specifically urge you to consider all of the Heroin and Opioid addicts who rely on Kratom as a safe alternative and deterrent from relapsing back to using harmful drugs.

Please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 6:52:57 PM

Hello Scott,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: terrible idea to have "WAR ON KRATOM"
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:53:45 AM

Dear Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

I for one am sincerely requesting that FDA allow the study and use of Kratom and to NOT BAN KRATOM.

After 8 years of doctor controlled and monitored opioid use for back pain and fibromyalgia, I was able to stop the opioid use. Withdrawals were pretty bad even though I had reduced the dosage by 80% in 3 months to prepare to quit. On my 3rd day of withdrawal pain, I tried some Kratom, only 2 teaspoons mixed in water and apple juice. Within minutes my withdrawal pain was gone and that lasted for 5 hours or so. I also noticed that my other normal pain was gone as well.

While some seem to want to compare Kratom with Opioids, the comparison fails when you discuss overdose and respiratory depression, the cause of death in opioid overdoses. Kratom does NOT cause respiratory depression and as a result can not kill you in the manner of opioids. I seriously doubt there have been any deaths caused by Kratom though FDA and CDC seem to count some people who died of other causes but had Kratom in their system at death.

Kratom must be studied as a plant with potential to create an entire new generation of analgesic drugs to ease pain. With this insane WAR ON OPIOIDS, aka "War on Opioid Pain Patients" the patients going to pain management doctors will no longer be able to get adequate pain relief even if they had been by using opioids.

Here is why I quit opioid drugs after 8 years:

1. I've become a pariah in doctors offices or those who no nothing about pain management or have been to seminars from CDC or FDA and have received fraudulent information and half truths about opioids. Sadly these medical specialists are mostly clueless about opioids and addiction and pain relief.
2. The government crackdown on pain patients required that I see a future reduction of 70%-80% of pain meds. Keep in mind that the amount of meds I had been taking DID NOT help the pain, because it had been 5-6 years since my last dose increase.
3. I was getting no pain relief, and only maintaining this addiction.
4. No benefits in continuing opioid treatments, all lose, lose, lose, no win.

I ask you to please consider leaving Kratom letgal and studying this plant to get the valuable extracts that reduce pain. Many people have found this to be invaluable for treating both pain and opioid withdrawals.

Question, is the WAR ON OPIOIDS doing anything to stop illegal Fentanyl from crossing the borders and poisoning drug addicts?

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Testimony
Date: Monday, November 20, 2017 12:02:55 PM

Hi Scott. My name is (b) (6) and I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits." Here is my story: I have been chronically ill since 2009. I was diagnosed with Lyme disease this year. I suffer from terrible nerve pain every single day that is absolutely debilitating. The only thing that got me back on my feet is Kratom. I refuse to take any opiate drug, considering the side affects and abuse rate. I've been down that route, and will never go back down that route. Kratom is the only thing that helps my chronic pain and chronic fatigue, with absolutely no side affects. Please reconsider what you are doing and saying about this miracle herb. If this miracle plant is banned, I will have to go on disability, and I don't want to go down that route either. It has given me my life back, and I want to keep it that way. I want to be a productive member of society, and I can't do that if I have to live in chronic pain. So just please reconsider what you are saying about this miracle herb. Thank you.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: To whom it may concern, - Legalize Kratom 100%
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 10:04:53 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 37 year old caucasian male from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I use Kratom almost weekly and I use it for headaches, my bi-polar and adhd. Kratom has never kept me awake wanting more or feeling for the plant. I have high anxiety and it has helped me become a better husband to my wife and father to my daughters. It rids me of nervousness and i can communicate better.

I am an alcoholic and go to AA meetings almost daily. I havent had a drink in over 5 years. I know what addiction is first hand. Kratom is not addicting at all. In fact Kratom has helped me transition from my drinking to now a respectable member of society who has a house hold income of over 300k.

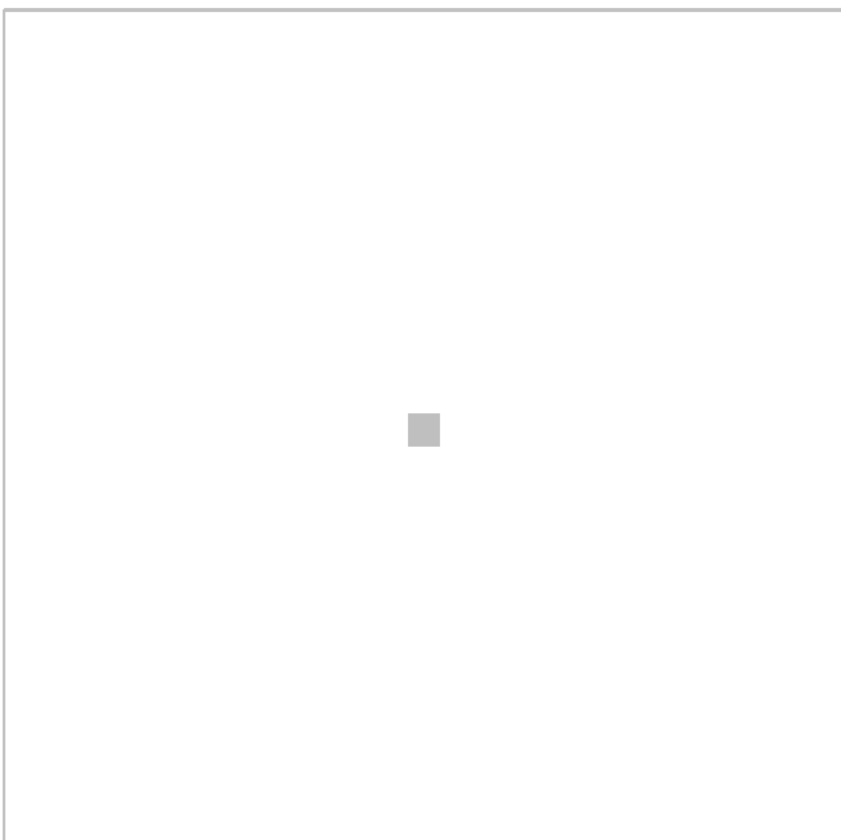
-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 7:25:53 PM

Hello Scott Gottlieb M.D.,

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 59 -year old.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was under a doctors care for a back injury. I have chronic back pain. The doctor prescribed me opiates & morphine. I was on this protocol for 4 years. The drugs were causing other problems, so I had to get off the drugs. Long story short, I had to go cold turkey to get off the drugs. It took me a year to get normal with the help of Kratom. I use Kratom on a daily basis for pain management.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: What can be a medicine for all.
Date: Sunday, November 19, 2017 7:09:30 PM

Hello my name is (b) (6) I am from (b) (6) You guys are probably getting a bunch of these emails about kratom. I really hope you all take the time to listen and be open minded about every individual who shares their reason or story. I am writing this email to explain my opinion on why I think it shouldn't be banned and why I've use it.

Ok so first off I understand the possible hazardous contamination through importing raw herbs from other countries. We don't know who were helping fund. And we don't truly know if any product is contaminated. However most of the businesses that buy it, stick with their trusted sources down the line.

Kratom can cause health issues of some degree. If a person is prone to certain illnesses or health issues kratom may not be ok to use. This goes for all the other plants and herbs sold in health stores such as wholefoods,basic foods vitamin worlds etc. All herbs and plants should be treated and looked at the same way. It isn't logical to just focus on one possibly life saving/dangerous plant.

The negative effects of kratom that i and others i know have experienced include, rise in body temp,high blood pressure ,sleepiness (which can be good for some) dehydration , dizziness and upset stomach.

Once a person finds their correct dosage, and trusted source. They can keep using the same amount and as long as they are sleeping fine,eating healthy and not over working themselves I really think they should be fine. Unless they are prone to have other health issues..

Everything is safe in moderation , some herbs/substances are for some,and some aren't for others. Those who abuse kratom or mix with other drugs are not being wise.

Drug safety education must be applied when using herbal products that are not Fda approved. Even pharmaceutical drug safety should be applied since many people abuse their prescriptions and do not understand or know the consequences.

I have used kratom for 7 years ,off and on. For pain,for energy for a mood boost.

It makes me feel normal when I'm stressed ,angry or in pain.

I've also used it to stay of other drugs I use to do,like pharmaceutical amphetamines. It helped through withdrawal and reduce the craving for the drug.. It really works.

My cousin and sister use it to stay off alcohol.

Best friend uses it to calm his mind at the end of each saysince he's in college for physics.

My mother uses it for arthritis because it makes the pain go away!

All kinds of people use itnfor different reasons. And as long as they are taught how to use it

properly they shouldn't be harmed.

More studies should be done and it really shouldn't be banned at all. It is just as dangerous as any other herbal supplements on the market that are fda approved and that are not.

Also no one snorts kratom, or injects it. Because it is plant matter and That is dangerous and probably unpleasant. Thats a big plus. Most people use kratom as a tea, capsules or mix it in juices..

Where as other drugs like oxycontin ,fentayls, Amphetamines can be snorted or injected.. kratom has the potential to save and maintain our lives .

I guarantee you know someone who could benefit off it, including yourself.

So it's your choice to get the word out, if kratom is made illegal. That will [make me](#) have to turn back to prescriptions for energy and pain.. Which I don't want to do. But will have to.. some people need it. And why take away a plant that has killed so little, less then advil.. alcohol ,prescriptions. It doesn't make sense...

I hope it stays how it is and people can just inform others better before they use any plant or substance. Drug safety is key to solving epidemics. You must let these past and current generations die off and teach future generations drug safety education. Drugs ,plants are going know where forever. Remember that people we use and find a way always...

Have a good day, night. Peace.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Your claims about Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:17:31 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm 23 years old. I had a bad injury in football my senior year of high school and had been addicted to opioid painkillers for 5 years from 17-22(Percocet, oxycodone, hydrocodone, copious amounts of tramadol etc) I was so addicted, it ruined my life. I no longer had relationship with my family, couldn't work, and couldn't even smile without the drugs. I've been in rehab, NA, and tried methadone and suboxone treatments(which made it worse by the way) and kratom saved my life, as it has many others. I'm living a happy life now. Please take into consideration how many relapses will be caused by taking Kratom away from the people. Not to mention, the 62 members of Congress who all know that a black market for this drug will lead to bad batches cut with heroin and other things. Have a good day

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: American's voices must be heard regarding Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 12:10:14 PM

Hello,

I am voicing my support of Kratom, and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent activities to demonize the herbal supplement. The FDA is taking actions to classify kratom on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. Kratom is a natural plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-I discovered kratom when I was searching for natural remedies for stress and mental anxiety. Kratom also helps my neck and back problems from degenerative disk disease. Kratom helps me live in a better standard of life by easing my mental and physical pain. its just that simple. If I did not have kratom I would be forced to use dangerous prescription pain medication and muscle relaxers along with anti-anxiety medication, all of which have powerful unwanted side effects. Kratom is used by millions of Americans who deserve better representation and care from the american government and its associated regulating offices. Kratom should be regulated like any other supplement, not banned due to lack of knowledge or information from the FDA.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the american people.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Banning Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 6:11:46 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 39-year old, living in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. Please read my story to the end. Consider this when you decide the fate of this plant.

10 years ago, my life nearly ceased. I had a near death experience as a result of my pregnancy. I had to get shots of epinephrine to bring me back from slipping away. I lost kidney function. I had uncontrolled blood pressure that took 3 different medications to regulate. Prior to (b) (6) 2007, my health was okay. After I was released from the hospital, my health declined more. While my kidneys had recovered, other systems started to fail. I had chronic, widespread pain, that could not be attributed to injury or disease. I started out with my family doctor who I had seen for many years. We started with the easiest fix, which happened to be vicodin. I was sent to physical therapy and underwent a litany of test that had no definitive result. Shortly thereafter I was sent to a pain management doctor. I was made to feel as if all of my issues were in my head, that I had made it up. I was not able to feel rested, I had pain in most of my body and no one could tell me why. The physical therapy was making me worse, it caused more pain than it treated, and the doctors were getting frustrated with the lack of results from, what they thought, should have been my cure.

Some time after seeing a few different pain management doctors and neurologists, and all of their expensive tests, my doctor dropped me. He accused me of being a drug seeker. I could barely work at this point. The pain was unrelenting and my family was suffering. I could barely care for my child and my husband had to pick up the slack. I had to have family members help out because after I worked 8 hours, I could barely get home before I was ready to pass out from all the pain. I had the only drug that, somewhat helped, ripped away from me. Nevertheless, I kept trying new doctors and specialists. I had one guy tell me that he could heal me, if I gave him 5000.00 for his treatment plan, which consisted of chiropractic care and a "Special diet", by this point I had wiped out my entire savings paying co-pays and deductibles, otherwise I would have tried it. You see, there are many in the medical, or quasi-medical field who prey on our want to get better. They rob us blind, hand us poison, and pretend they do not know us anymore.

My story is long and quite redundant, so I will summarize, I have been sick for 10 years. I researched Kratom for 2 years before I tried it because I was afraid it was a hoax. It is not a hoax. It is not dangerous. I know what is wrong with me now. I have seen so many doctors. I got a genetic test done last year. I have a connective tissue disorder. I will never be pain free. My son has it too. I do not get to enjoy the benefit of medical marijuana, because I still work and most employers do not allow this, even when it is legal in my state. I cannot change professions so that I can have access to MMJ. Kratom is the only thing that has helped me regain some of my normalcy. I work, my commute is an hour both ways. I have a side business that I do on the weekends. I spend time with my family, and I can participate -BECAUSE of Kratom. I am not bedridden. I am not suicidal. I do not suffer from depression. If not for this plant, I might not be here. I do not have to see a pain management doctor anymore. I do not have to count pills, I do not have to worry about someone robbing me as I leave the pharmacy. I do not have to worry about having bad pain days- because I have kratom. I have a clear mind, every single day. It does not make you loopy and if you do take too much, you throw up- and that is it. Please stop spreading misinformation. Please listen to us. I do not care if you regulate this like supplements-

but DO NOT make it illegal. Stop letting the pharmaceutical companies sway your decisions with money. Do the right thing. Look at the studies that have already been done. Read our stories, listen to how many people this plant is saving. I am not an addict, I was never an addict, but the system made me think I was, and treated me like I was. There are days, sometimes weekly, that I do not take it and I have no desire, no craving, no clock watching. Let me dictate my level of life, let me control how much pain I can handle. Let me continue to work, provide, and care for my family.

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) er
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Benefits of Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 8:55:53 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 33 year old man from (b) (6). I do reside in a legal county for Kratom. I have been using Kratom for the benefits of pain relief, for severe back pain, and for depression for 3 years. I wish you would reconsider banning Kratom. It has several benefits and no side effects like most prescriptions that you receive from a doctors office. My father tried it to help with pain relief from a disabling back injury he received work related several years ago and he has seen improvement with his mobility using the recommend dosage of Kratom compared to the several prescriptions he has received from his doctors. I think it is unfair that there are several people that use Kratom properly for pain relief or for depression are being punished for the people that don't want to use Kratom properly. My wife suffers from severe migraines for the past 25 years. She has been on several prescriptions, has been to multiple specialists and has tried any treatment available to help relieve her migraines and none of them work. She tried a small amount of Kratom and within an hour her migraine was completely gone and she suffered no side effects like she would if she had a prescription. I feel that the science that is out there that shows not just the benefits but also any side effects should be looked at again and Kratom should be given a true chance. I hope that you consider looking into this matter and I thank you for much for your time.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA - Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 2:33:30 AM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6). I live in (b) (6) and I am 39 years old. As you know, we are drowning here in an epidemic of opiate addiction.

I would like you to know that I do not agree with your recent campaign against Kratom. I began to hear about Kratom a few years ago. I have had an addiction problem for many years. I finally tried Kratom after unsuccessfully using other more conventional medicines like Suboxone and Methadone. Kratom worked! I was able to safely and painlessly detox and I am so grateful that this life-saving medicine was available to me.

I am asking you to publicly rescind your public health advisory regarding Kratom. I would also like to ask you to speak with addicts who have successfully used this medicine to detox with very little withdrawal. It truly is unlike anything I've ever seen or experienced. I also used to work in a drug & alcohol detox for many years, so besides my personal experience, I have firsthand experience from working in the field.

I believe that inhibiting the ability to use Kratom legally will cause thousands or millions of addicts to return to street drugs. Obviously, they will die. The opiates are so widely available. Kratom is not an opiate and it's not an opiate analogue. The addiction potential is not comparable to opiates.

If you prohibit the use of Kratom, then we will not be able to do further research regarding Kratom's safety because a ban would prevent that from happening. I feel you need to allow time to determine the positive uses of this medicine. That would only be necessary because you and others like you do not believe what we are saying. But from my side of the fence, here in the trenches, I can tell you that Kratom is saving lives. Please do not stop this medication from saving more lives in the future.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA / DEA Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 9:07:30 AM

Good morning,

I am writing you today as your constitute of (b) (6) to let you know that I am in opposition of the FDA's recent report on Kratom and completely against the direction they are going. Scheduling a substance before it is studied creates a huge issue. I am a chronic migraine sufferer and rely on kratom, I am able to make a glass of tea with zero negative effects instead of taking a triptan that has many side effects. I am a 33 year old male, husband and father of four, I work for one of my Minnesota's top law firms. I am NOT a drug user, please don't change that.

Thank you for your time,

- (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA Comments on Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 6:09:50 AM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I discovered Kratom from a friend in about 2011. At the time my anxiety and social anxiety was taking over my life. I was drinking too much alcohol in order to hang out with friends. I could barely go to a shopping mall without having a panic attack. For some reason, Zoloft and others were not working. I started noticing when I was drinking some Kratom tea after doing tons of research on the correct doses (I am also a hypochondriac) that I could go out to bars/social events/etc without even drinking and have a good time. I was meeting more people and having a great social life all the sudden. I also completely stopped drinking! Since Kratom has changed my life for the better I have met my lovely wife due to not getting debilitating anxiety every time I go out and now we have a beautiful son. I have started running marathons and ultra marathons and am in the best shape of my life! I also know people that Kratom has saved them from being hooked on heroin. It has also really helped many soldiers with PTSD. If I only knew about it before my sister in law overdosed and died from heroin!

Long story short Kratom, which is in the coffee family and less addictive than coffee if used properly by adults (I have quit for weeks during tougher financial times) has changed so many lives for the better, definitely mine. I have a feeling that a ban will cause people to go back to drinking, opiate addiction, and negatively impact many lives in many ways.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA health advisory on kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 5:08:52 PM

My name is (b) (6), i am a 34 year old male from (b) (6).

I am writing to you today in light of the FDA's recent health advisory on kratom. I strongly disagree with their advisory, as it is nothing but a smear campaign and completely false. Kratom has been used safely here in America for many years and is helping millions of people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions with their ailments. It has also been very successful in fighting the ever-growing opioid epidemic, giving many individuals a much safer, and more inexpensive option to battling addiction, and pain management. It does all of this without the risk of respiratory depression and does not caused inebriation, making it possible for people to find relief while being productive.

I discovered kratom 9 years ago while under a pain management contract where i was prescribed hydrocodone. I have severe postural kyphosis and a subsequent herniated disk. My everyday back pain was made much worse working as a paramedic, and i was unable to take the hydrocodone on work days due to driving a vehicle and providing patient care. My days at work were excruciating and the medication provided very little relief on my days off. On top of that, i would have to go through withdrawals WHILE PROVIDING PATIENT CARE. Once i began using kratom, all of my symptoms virtually disappeared. I was able to find relief, and the relief it provided did not cause any sort of inebriation, allowing me to focus at work and provided much better patient care. It also has provided me with the energy and drive to open my own business, exercise 6 days a week, and i no longer drink alcohol, or even caffeine.

Kratom is a safe and effective alternative to pharmaceutical drugs and is helping millions of people lead productive and healthy lives. Banning or restricting kratom would have terrible consequences and result in many deaths due to illicit drugs they would be forced to resort to and would greatly impact my quality of life as a productive member of society.

Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA Kratom Ban
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 5:31:16 PM

My name is (b) (6) and i'm a 19 year old college student from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

- I came to learn about kratom through a friend when searching for options to reduce stress and anxiety and help with falling asleep at night. I have been taking kratom responsibly for around one year now, and it has helped tremendously.

-Being a college student, it is extremely important for me to be able to fall asleep on time and get a good night's rest. It is also extremely important for me to be able to combat high stress and anxiety due to an extremely busy schedule. I fear for what would happen if I did not have kratom as a safe option. I would never want to be forced to turn to prescription pills to help with these problems because my family has a history of addiction. I have many friends who have also chosen kratom to help with different problems and they have all benefited from it greatly.

- Last year, just before thanksgiving, my uncle passed away. We later learned it was from a prescription pill overdose due to an addiction he had developed, and been hiding, after a serious back surgery. My uncle was a good man who was married and just finished a college degree. I miss him dearly. I genuinely believe that had he known of kratom being an alternative and safe source of relieving pain, he would be alive today.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues, and has changed my life for the better. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I Disagree With FDA's ban on Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 1:00:24 AM

Greetings,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 39 year old woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of the herb Kratom and I disagree with the FDA and their smear campaign against this herb. This herb helps so many deal with pain and has helped so many people quit drugs and alcohol. While I have never been an addict, I take this herb to help with pain from a knee injury. Before Kratom, I was unable to run and my knee would simply start hurting and force me to stop. With Kratom, I run 3-4 days a week and maintain a healthy lifestyle. I lost weight and I keep increasing my fitness goals.

Kratom does not cause respiratory depression which is the main cause of death in an opiate overdose. Kratom has been used in Southeast Asia for hundreds of years and has not caused one single death. In fact, historically many Asians used this herb to quit using Opium. Just like many people use this herb to quit using drugs. With America's current Opioid Crisis, I feel it is highly irresponsible to make this herb illegal. The people in America who supposedly died from Kratom, had medications in their system. Some of those medications were Opioid painkillers. Please do not make this herb illegal. It should be studied more so humanity can get the maximum benefit from it. I use this herb and I am a responsible adult. If you have any further questions, please contact the American Kratom Association.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I stand for Kratom!
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 5:44:01 PM

Hello and kind regards, i am inquiring about the information posted on the FDA page regarding your concerns over the safety of kratom. I would like to state that there is great deal of misinformation and I believe that conclusions are being made too quickly and not enough research is being done by the Food and Drug Administration to be able to make such claims and influencing the public opinion on the plant and almost demonizing it. As having the title of the commisioner of America's Food and Drug Administraion, i do believe it is your duty to inform the public solid studied facts about things available for consumption, and not premature assumptions.

I, as a responsible kratom user for anxiety, depression, and low motivation, i have found this plant to be a godsend. I am enabled to function normally without the setbacks that sufferers of anxiety and depression deal with. Its effects are ever so subtle, it is not some legal high that the FDA seems to be assuming. Many users who got their lives back with use are now stricken by fear of having to resort back to harmful painkillers as a result of a ban on kratom due to a misunderstanding of it. It is very important to get an understanding from those who benefit from this plant as there are MILLIONS of high functioning citizens who responsibly use it without experiencing health issues such as the infamous deadly respiratory depression caused by the FDA's approved pharmaceutical addictive opioids where on the other hand, there is absolutely no evidence of kratom causing such a lethal issue. I understand there have been 36 reported deaths that FDA and DEA both claim are related to solely kratom, however, i have looked deeper into the matter and concluded that there is missing information and the deaths also involved multiple substances that are considered very lethal when in combination and pre existing conditions. Not to mention, documented use of kratom dates back over a hundred years (maybe more) in asia.. No reported fatalities ever have been recorded.

Along with many many other Kratom users that stand with me on this matter, and I'm sure I speak for many others when I say that I implore that the FDA and DEA consider allowing the people to have the choice whether to utilize this healing plant from nature as an alternative to deadly, man-made life ruining prescriptions. We understand it may put a hole in pharmaceutical profits, however, which do you consider more valuable, dirty money from deadly so called "medicine" or a legitimate remedy for happier/healthier people? We ask of you that you all have an open mind to consider our request to keep Mitragyna Speciosa available to all and especially to help those who benefit from it, we should not have to feel like we have to struggle against our own government for this right. After all, if government organizations really are for the people.. Shouldnt the people get to decide? We the people are speaking out and we wish to be heard. Thank you for your time and consideration. Many lives will be ever so grateful if the right decision is made.

Respectfully yours,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Important matter From (b) (6) ~ Scott Gottlieb M.D. / Commissioner
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 12:26:20 AM

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration,

My Name is (b) (6) .

I am a 55-year-old male, (now disabled) father of 5 grandfather of 4.

I was in a head on collision several years ago which resulted in a spinal fusion and corpectomy. A father and son, drunk went through a stop sign and hit me dead on. I went from 0 MPH to 50, instantly, and flew 220 ft through a field. Months later my left side went numb and stopped working. I learned that my neck was broken. They removed the broken vertebrae in my neck and placed a hockey puck-like disc with hardware and screws. I have been living a life of horrifying pain and discomfort for 3 years, sleep was impossible. I am in pain management with the highest allowable opiates, and continuous injections. I don't even believe in using medication, I never have. I've been healthy and active all my life. I don't do drugs. I don't even drink alcohol. I love a natural whole foods lifestyle if possible.

I have tried everything to help relieve the pain. And I mean everything. It feels like having a 5 foot pair of vise-Grips on your neck 24/7. The horrific pain made me want to die. I thought there was no way out, the journey has been nothing short of epic and heart breaking. I have not been able to work since before the accident. I have learned without sleep you will die!

But I have kids and grandkids, people I love.

Thank God that has now changed...

Then 4 months ago...

A friend shared info about Kratom with me and immediately I saw negative info from the DEA, etc. So initially I passed... months continue to go by with no hope. Then I saw Chris bell in a video about Kratom and it caught my interest again... and I tried it.

It works! I am astonished!

Very little pain, and I sleep like a baby!

I am so excited to have my life back!

I would not want to exist with the pain I endured, now I don't have to.

This is the good side of this amazing botanical, there is no bad.

There's always some people who will make anything bad

Many don't know the truth about Kratom.

It is safe, wonderfully effective, and miraculous

.

Now... I am tapering of the horrible opioids.

I am excited I don't have to live the rest of my life on needing \$1500 a month of

prescription opioids!

(which the state pays for)

I am replacing toxic drugs with natural wonderful safe Kratom.

It works much better than opioids for pain, without the horrible side effects and risk.

This is a life changer!

I found out about the American Kratom association. They are leading the fight to keep this amazing plant available for people like me who need it. Hats off to them for what they are doing! People like me... and hundreds of thousands of others have no hope without this wonderful botanical. It is not what some demonize it to be. I am proof. It is not addictive, no more than coffee. NO bad side effects when used responsibly.

Please. Understand and support this wonderful life changing cause.

Kratom gives people hope and life. You will be saving many lives.

You will give countless people the ability to live like others who are not disabled.

I believe Kratom is the answer to the opioid crisis in America that is killing so many people we know and love.

No one ever died from it. It doesn't get you high. It relieves pain.

I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

I couldn't bear the thought of going back to that painful existence.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Kindest regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal (Please Read)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 6:37:45 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 25-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I'm a caregiver to my disabled mother who is wheelchair-bound. She was in a bad car accident in 1981, leaving her with multiple injuries including brain damage. She has lived with pain ever since, meaning my whole life. She also fell and broke her hip in 2014 and that just added to the suffering she endures every day. I learned about kratom a couple of years ago while searching for ways I could help her get some relief so she could feel good again, and not cry so much. Well, it turned out that kratom did miracles for her and she's starting to feel as if she has her life back.

She's had countless surgical operations spanning over the last 20 years. Doctors have prescribe her pain medicine, but it just made her feel worse and she didn't want to get hooked on the medicine. She has been to chiropractors, physical therapy, pain specialists, neurologists, etc... with no relief. Ever since she found kratom, she's slowly become like a new person, who wants to actually do new things and see people she hasn't seen in years. On top of all of that, she no longer takes any kind of medications whatsoever.

Kratom has truly changed her life, and I am so happy for her. My mother means the world to me, and I would do anything in the world to keep her feeling better. Kratom has saved her.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my mother's life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my mother's quality of life will not be the same without kratom.

Attached is an infographic that I urge to to view.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

KRATOM BY THE NUMBERS

26,000 AMERICANS

have asked President Trump to keep kratom legal.

A 2016 petition supporting kratom attracted more than

142,000 SIGNERS

from the U.S.



99.1%

OF 23,000+ COMMENTERS

to the DEA in late 2016
opposed a kratom ban.

1,175 doctors, vets,
scientists & law officers
told the DEA they
don't want a kratom ban.



A BIPARTISAN
62 U.S. HOUSE & SENATE MEMBERS

asked the DEA not to proceed
with a ban on kratom.



0%

OF EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE
PROFESSIONALS/EMTs

responding to an online survey
supported a ban on kratom.



Kratom consumers report that the
botanical supplement is used for
many things including

MINOR PAIN AND TO
PROMOTE A SENSE
OF HEALTH &
WELL-BEING.



ZERO DEATHS

have been
proven to be
caused by
kratom.



One of the world's leading experts on drug
abuse and addiction says kratom has
NO MORE POTENTIAL FOR "SUBSTANCE
USE DISORDER" THAN CAFFEINE ...

Chamomile, St. John's Wort, and nutmeg are dietary
supplements that are comparable to kratom in terms
of the potential for addiction. There is no basis for
classifying kratom like heroin or LSD.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 9:58:58 PM

Hi, my name is (b) (6). I live in (b) (6). (b) (6) ago I was in a really bad car accident. In the car accident a guard rail went through the bottom part of my leg through blood vessels, muscle, and into my nerves. I suffered chronic nerve damage and very poor blood circulation. After that happened I wasn't prescribed OxyCotin for the pain, gabapentin for the nerve damage, and Zoloft for my anxiety and depression after my wreck occurred. After a couple months of taking my prescribed medication I wanted to taper off of them and look too see if there was anything safer and natural that could help me with no serious side effects. That's when I found Kratom. For about a year I've been taking Kratom and it's been a miracle plant. It helps with my nerve damage, my muscle pain, and it helps thin my blood so the circulation is more normal, and helps tremendously with my anxiety. I pray it stays legal because I'm sure I'm not the only one going through pain like this. The side effects for my prescribed medication are much worse then a natural plant. Thank you for your consideration.

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 6:31:13 PM

To all the powers that be;

My name is (b) (6) and I am 56 Years old. I have been a kratom user for a year.

I suffer from arthritis pain from my hips and knees. It is quickly deteriorated to a now qualify for knee replacement surgery. I also suffer from ddd which is a degenerative disk disease. For about 7 years I have been on strong pain relief medication. I wanted to be relieved of pain, not be a zombie moving around in a cloudy stupor. Since I have my life back with kratom I can be both mentally and physically present in my life.

I no longer need the morphine or percocets or vicodin or xanax that kept me in a drugged up state for so many years. I am not afraid to drive like I used to be. I am now an active member of my family's lives. I'm not cured, and never expected to be. But kratom manages my pain without the fog of medications. And I can still remember my new and beautiful family memories.

Thank you for your time!

Please keep kratom legal. It saved my life and thousands of others.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal Please!
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 9:19:13 AM

Dear commissioner:

Please keep the herb kratom legal and available to all. This natural plant allows people with chronic pain to live without having to be addicted to opioids and worse! It has been a godsend for so many and the scientific data exists to show how safe the herb is. Please help us keep it available to all.

Thank you.

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal!!!
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 8:21:36 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I am writing to support Kratom. I am against the FDA and the DEA banning it. I discovered Kratom a few years ago. It has saved my life. I suffer from both rheumatoid arthritis and bipolar disorder. I have a past history of drug abuse and prescription narcotic abuse. Ever since discovering Kratom, I have managed my anxiety, depression, and physical joint pain successfully with kratom. It has allowed me to function daily. I mostly find relief in my anxiety and joint pain. Kratom is safe. We know this. There is so much misinformation about it. It has helped numerous people lead healthy lives away from narcotics. I have never taken too much kratom. I have never had to be hospitalized for kratom. I cannot say the same for narcotics. This country is in a narcotic tailspin. Kratom is the answer. Kratom is the solution. For many of us kratom is the best and natural solution.

I'm asking you to read the research. Read the stories. Talk to the people. We are not abusing it. We are not getting high. We are living lives that we would not have had without kratom.

Before this country makes a huge mistake in banning it, please read everything you can and talk to everyone you can about this wonderful and amazing plant. You will hear many stories of success.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit
<https://www.americkratom.org/>

Keep kratom legal.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal. It saved my life
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 4:33:34 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 37 years old male from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came to learn about Kratom by researching alcoholism online. I was an alcoholic, drinking a bottle of vodka a day, and I am talking about the big handle bottle. My blood pressure was in hypertension ranges, my cholesterol was 80 points above normal and my liver values were extremely elevated. This was a year ago in 2016, during my annual physical. I found Kratom after researching ways to stop drinking alcohol as I was an alcoholic for many years (at least 7 plus years). I tried Kratom and since that day, I have not touched alcohol again. I do not even have the urge to drink anymore. I have been using Kratom very minimal and conservatively on a daily basis. In August of this year (2017), I had my annual physical. My blood pressure has dropped to normal ranges (124/84), my cholesterol was 120 and my liver values returned to normal ranges.

Last year my doctor told me I needed to make a change or I would be put on blood pressure medications and cholesterol medications. He also said I would be headed towards liver issues if I continued down the road of being an alcoholic. I truly believe that Kratom has saved my life. My physical stats that are facts, prove that to be the case. As I am no longer in danger of any health issues. I am a responsible adult and should have access to this natural plant. I fear that if Kratom is made illegal I will slip back into drinking alcohol. This is NOT switching one addiction for the other as I only take Kratom in the morning for a coffee like effect and at night for a melatonin like effect to help me sleep. I have no urge to drink alcohol anymore, I do not even drink beer if I go out to dinner. It has truly changed my life for the better. Alcohol ruined so many relationships in my life and was the cause of my divorce. I wish I would have found Kratom earlier, I would still be married and have my family together.

Kratom has truly given my life back to me and I am able to mend my relationships with the people that alcohol ruined. Alcohol kills hundreds of thousands of people every year. In car accidents and health related issues. Had I not found Kratom, I believe I would have been added to those statistics. How can something so helpful like Kratom be made illegal, while alcohol and tobacco remain legal? To me this shows me that the FDA does not care about my health and other people's healthy lives. I have read many stories of actual people being able to stop HEROIN by using the NATURAL PLANT KRATOM. The current opioid crisis is out of control and I have read many testimonials of Kratom saving people from addiction to prescription pain pills. This natural plant is saving lives!

In conclusion Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs and alcohol with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own

with alcohol. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the our country.

V/r

(b) (6)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 12:59:24 AM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 27 year old male from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I first came to use Kratom in the spring of 2013. I discovered Kratom through my own extensive research of supplements for anxiety and depression. I graduated from (b) (6) in May 2013 with a degree in finance. Through out my whole life and especially in college I suffered from severe social anxiety which would lead to depression. To battle my anxiety I turned to alcohol which seemed to have an immediate effect. I was a person you would call a functional alcoholic. I would drink everyday to just feel normal and to get rid of that anxiety. But as you know heavy drinking will kill you from the inside out. My health began to slowly decline. I would have tremors in my hands, I didnt care about eating, I was becoming someone who I was not. I happen to go to a doctor who gave me a prescription for Valium. I can tell you I will never take one of big pharma's pills again. Valium turned me into a walking zombie that if I would have continued taking that, I would have failed out of college and probably would not be here today. Drinking appeared to be my only way of battling anxiety. It was until I found Kratom when I was finally able to give up drinking completely. I will take kratom every morning as a dietary supplement which aids me in my battle against anxiety. I am finally able to live a normal life without any depression or anxiety and I dont have to be boozing all the time putting myself and others in harms way. I am now a Sr. Financial Analyst for (b) (6), I am in the best physical shape of my life and most importantly I am enjoying life. I consider myself to be well educated and familiar with Kratom that I strongly disagree with the FDAs claims of of Kratom being a potential killer. That is absolutely incorrect information and that is a fact not an opinion. Kratom has given me my life back and I will not go back to the person I use to be. I do not need to seek any professional help, or try any of big pharma's medications. I am in 100% control of my life and I will do whatever it takes to ensure that I continue to have access to the natural herb Kratom.

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keeping Kratom Legal
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:36:53 AM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6) and I'm 51 years old from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I want to start by saying thank you in advance for taking the time to read this. I know your time is valuable, but I and many others feel this is a very serious issue, with very serious consequences. With that being said, here is my plea.

For 30 years I drank heavily to numb very deep problems and to cope with the outside world. I drank at home, at work and pretty much wouldn't go anywhere that didn't have alcohol available. I have lost/quit more jobs than I can remember, lost more friends and relationships than I can count, and how I managed to stay alive, not to mention keep from killing anyone by drunk driving is beyond me.

I have been in a relationship with an incredible person for 15 years now, but just over two years ago I was told I could quit drinking, or quit the relationship. I had been dabbling in kratom for a few years, but never thought to put it to the test and see if it could actually help me stop. Without alcohol I was unable to socialize, I felt clumsy, jittery and the panic attacks from my youth came back with a vengeance. I started taking kratom more seriously and researched, tried out different strains and doses that worked for me and two years later I am still alcohol free. I am unable to do the whole AA thing due to my social issues and the fact that they put too much religion into it. I found a very safe sweet spot, which is just one tsp of either white or red veined MD (Maeng Da), with another 1/2 tsp of yellow (calming) strain about 6-8 hours later. That's it! That's all I need to be able to get up every day happy to be alive, able to get motivated to clean the house, cook, do laundry and take care of the people in my life.

Over a year ago I was drinking on average 9-14 beers and a pint of tequila a day, or 8-12 of the mini bottles of 99% schnapps. I was killing myself at a fast pace. To this day I am still finding empty bottles I had hidden around the house, and the shame I feel when that happens is gut wrenching.

I still have a long way to go on my social anxieties, but going from that amount of alcohol to 1-1/2 TEASPOONS of this miracle plant a day is nothing short of astonishing. To take that away from me, and so many others with similar stories is not only unthinkable, but just plain evil.

We have GOT to stop the big pharma lobbyists who's only concern is to ban an incredible plant that may take a few dollars away from the legalized drug pushers. These are the same lobbyists who for decades have been falsely warning people about the dangers of pot, when we all know otherwise now. Opiates are killing more and more people every day and yet they are given out like M&M's with no regard for the lives they are ruining, and it doesn't take a genius to know that alcohol is responsible for a countless loss of lives.

Kratom is starting to not only save lives, but to give back the quality of life to so many people, so you'll understand why I feel the need to open myself up to ridicule and the possibility of being shunned. This letter was way too long and I am sorry about that, so I'll end it by saying if the bought and paid for politicians take this away from me and SO many others, there will be an epidemic of relapses that I can't bear to think about. I don't understand why something that could possibly end, or at least drastically reduce the drug addiction problem in this country isn't being

enthusiastically researched, but instead automatically vilified without even pausing to look into it. The sad thing about this, is that I'm learning every day that it's not about the people anymore, it's about the donors. Again, thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to hear what I have to say.

Very Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom (Mitragyna speciosa)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 1:37:43 AM

Kratom is a safe alternative with important medicinal uses and has changed the lives of so many Americans. I fear this action will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic by effectively casting them back into the current opioid and heroin epidemic. This would effectively turn millions of Americans using this plant into felons costing taxpayers millions while obliterating current federal research on the plant. Harsh penalties, such as a felony charge for possessing Kratom (Mitragyna Speciosa) are ineffective, and they severely limit future prospects for jobs, housing, voting rights, food assistance, and education-Prospects that can be permanently damaging, while costing American citizens tax revenue that is better spent on serious crime. Kratom is a dietary supplement no different than using St. Johns wort or Valerian root or drinking a cup of coffee in the morning.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 9:29:41 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 64 year old male from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was involved in an automobile accident, that resulted in numerous back and joint surgeries.

I became addicted to narcotic pain medications, morphine, oxycodone, and fentanyl patches, remaining on these medications resulting in near overdoses for over 10 years. Desperate for help I consulted the internet and came upon kratom.

I have since stopped taking any narcotic medications and take a small amount of kratom, that I have taken for over 2 years now. I have a Wife and 5 children and kratom has given my life and my family back to me. I would most likely not be here today if not for kratom.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 9:56:58 AM

Dear Sir,

I have been taking Kratom for bipolar disorder, depression, and pain for going on 3 years now. In simple terms it works! We in this country have a opioid epidemic going on, and Kratom is also helping thousands, maybe millions in this regard as well. Kratom needs to be regulated. Not banned and made illegal.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @yahoo.com
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 11:12:08 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 20-year old student from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started using kratom as a healthy and natural substitute for pain relief and anti depression medication. Many of my colleges who suffer with these same issues have turned to kratom as a more effective treatment method.

Since I have started using kratom, I have been able to quit all of my other synthetic medications (citalopram, Xanax, ibuprofen). I have also been able to stop drinking coffee from it's use. I had been using these medications for about 6 years before finding kratom. Nothing else has been able to get me off this regiment of drugs except this plant.

Kratom has given me my life back. Without it, I would not be nearly as productive in my studies and life in general. I am so thankful for this plant and for it's myriad of uses as a healthy alternative to pharmaceutical drugs.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 11:25:22 AM

Hello FDA.

My name is (b) (6); I am an (b) (6) resident.

I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and your smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

My wife and I use kratom as a pain killer. Ibuprofen or naproxen give us both stomach aches and other issues. Kratom has been more effective than those with smaller doses and no real side effects for us. Please stop working to take away freedoms from the citizens you should be working for.

I would like a response on this please. I've read the information the FDA has been putting out and it seems very dubious when compared to mine and others experiences.

Best Regards

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 12:47:49 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 61-year old disabled person from (b) (6) I have several herniated/ruptured lower lumbar disks, stenosis, sacral joint problems, sciatica, etc.. I've also had five operations on my right arm which has caused RSD/CRPS in 1/4 of my body as well as lasting restricted arm use and pain. My condition occasionally causes anxiety and depression. Who wouldn't be unhappy living in pain every day?

I just tried Kratom two days ago. I had some Monday and Tuesday. I did not get "high", it simply relieved the pain I have every single day of my life because I refuse to use the morphine, hydrocodone, keppra, lyrica, cymbalta, nucynta, tizanidine, noroflex, xanax, elavil or any of the other medications thrown at me by my doctors, with no plan to ever stop taking them, just ever increasing doses as my body got used to them. And every single one of them has caused thousands of overdose deaths as well as a host of terrible side effects.

For the first time in at least a year, I was able to sit down and read a book. Normally this is physically impossible for me due to pain and muscle spasms. I usually wake up three, four times a night from pain and back spasms, and always wake up with severe back pain, exhausted. Not today. I attribute this to the Kratom. I did not wake up hungover or groggy. How can this plant NOT be researched for use by the millions of people in my shoes???

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 1:57:42 PM

Commissioner of FDA:

I feel the FDA's negative info being released to the public is not warranted.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 71-year old Retired Federal Employee with over 25 Years of Service, Also a Retired USAF Master Sergeant with over 25 Years of Service to my Country. I now reside in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started to use kratom about eight months ago, through the urging of my daughter, who by the way is (Registered Nurse) In that time I have been able to reduce my Doctor Prescribed Medications (Neurontin, Lyrica, and Carbatrol) in some cases by three fourths. I have a diagnosed condition called **(Trigeminal Neuralgia.) Kratom has helped me manage my pain immensely. I hope to stop all prescribed medications soon, but I am afraid to go against my Doctors prescribed medications at this time.**

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (The know side-effects of the drugs I now take) I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the USA.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:15:52 PM

Hello, I'm a 35 year old father of two and I have been using kratom since 2009. I do not use recreational drugs or drink alcohol. I do feel that it is a life saver for me. I suffer from extreme anxiety and have been prescribed a number of anti anxiety medications, none of which have worked for me. Kratom is nothing but a harmless supplement I take and I'm as healthy as can be. I really do appreciate the work you all do, but this aggressive stance on kratom has me losing faith in your organisation. I really hope you will find that if you take this plant away, so many people will suffer and turn to harmful replacements. I do want to see all the overdoses and drug abuse dealt with, but this is the wrong way of going about that. I hope that you look into the scientific research that has already been done with kratom.

Thank you for your time!
with love and respect,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:43:57 PM

Doctor Gottlieb,

I am a 66 year old who worked as a psychiatric nurse practitioner for many years which included working with patients with addiction and substance abuse so I am well aware of the terrible opioid epidemic. To ban Kratom would be a huge mistake. Kratom helps many recovering addicts in a safe way to get off opioids and better than the often cost prohibitive methadone and suboxone and also helps remove risk of relapse. It also helps many others including myself. I have never had an addiction problem except for nicotine in the past. I now use Kratom for problems with pain, restless leg and irritable bowel and it WORKS. There is no 'high' associated with it and stopping Kratom is on par with stopping coffee. There is no respiratory depression or other dangerous side effects. Please do not schedule this herb, I can guarantee that this would only worsen the opioid crisis.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 5:24:29 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I live in (b) (6). I am husband, a father of two handsome young boys, and work at a large hospital in (b) (6). I'm contacting you today to urge your administration not to ban the selling and consumption of Kratom. I have been using Kratom for 5 years for chronic pain, due to a Lower spine herniation. Please reconsider your scheduling of Kratom. I don't want to have to go back on opioid pain pills. And with doctors being more and more reluctant to prescribe them, I doubt I'd be able to get any if it came to me needing them, which would leave me and millions of other Americans and their families no less, in dire situations. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this email @ (b) (6)

Cell phone- (b) (6)

Address-

(b) (6)

Thank you

-(b) (6) -

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:54:14 PM

My name is (b) (6). I'm 52 years old and I live in (b) (6). I'm writing to ask you to please reconsider your stance on the herb Kratom. I have been taking Kratom for almost 4 years. I have suffered with two types of arthritis for the past 13 years. It shut down my whole life. I just existed rather than lived. I discovered Kratom 4 years ago and it has saved me. It treats my pain and anxiety better than any prescription drug and doesn't have any of the side effects that prescription pain and anxiety medication have. I have my life back. I'm able to take care of my family again and have even gone back to work at the daycare I started years ago. If Kratom is taken away from me I don't know how I will survive. I haven't take prescription medication in over 3 years and I will never take them again. They caused more problems than the arthritis did. So what is left for me do? If given a chance Kratom could save this country from the opiate epidemic! Alcohol and tobacco kill thousands of people every year but they can be purchased in most stores and they remain legal. I can't comprehend why those two drugs remain legal but Kratom is being prosecuted as a danger to Americans. I would love for someone at the FDA to explain to me the logic of allowing drugs that kill to be sold in this country but an herb that helps so many people is being banned.
PLEASE DO NOT TAKE KRATOM FROM US!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 8:03:33 PM

Dear sir;

I am not under any belief; but, rather a knowing of your good.

I am a 45-year-old school counselor. Ten years ago a 20 year old US Marine driving under the influence crashed into the rear of my vehicle at approximately 50mph, while I was stopped at a red light. After several surgeries and ten years of prescribed oxycotin and percocets, I was Blessed a few years ago to have discovered Kratom. Since, I've completely stopped seeing my doctor and have been off All pain killers, i.e., opiates, for three years. Finally, I have my life back and as you're well aware of, I'm among a growing numbers of others. I am also aware of your inner knowledge of just how safe, extremely effective and cost most effective Kratom is.

I have an intuitiveness, that you too, have a higher awareness, will eventually follow your inner most feelings and allow your guidance system to do what you're designed to do.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 8:21:59 PM

Hello my name is (b) (6) I am writing you in concern of your statement about kratom I don't agree with your findings whatsoever. Kratom is harmless and the 8 factor test shows that ..we had 150,000 ppl sing a white house petition. Almost 99% of the public comments listed on the federal register comment period. My question is why are you really trying to take anytime natural away from us ? The supplement of kratom has improved my life greatly .. helps me focus and feel just calm. Please rethink this!

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 10:01:40 AM

Hi Commissioner, my name is (b) (6). I have been an opiate addict for 20+ years. The only thing I have ever had to give me hope is Kratom. It is not dangerous like you say it is. It helps me be a good Dad, husband, employee, and member of society. I am so scared of that being taken away from me. I beg you, please reconsider your decision on kratom. It is helping so many people I know to make a life for themselves, despite being an addict. It is safe. We need you to listen to us. Please sir! You should be taking our life line away and that is so cruel. Thank you so much for reading this and I really appreciate your service. I know that our best interest is in your heart.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 3:04:45 AM

Would like to see you keep kratom legal for us the American people. It has done more good in a time when it is really needed. We have a very scary and serious problem in America with herion.kids and adults are falling victim from this evil drug. Kratom is giving them a new hope to have a normal life. Saving hundreds of thousands. Please take a better look at how this can and will impact the American people you are supposed to be looking out for. The ban on kratom will cause alot of deaths by opiates.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 11:41:04 AM

This is (b) (6), I am a professional Firefighter in (b) (6) and have been for over 20 years. Over the course of my career I have had numerous injuries, but my shoulder and neck pain continue to bother me. Doctors that I have been to only tried to subscribe pain medication. I researched a healthier way to manage pain. Kratom was listed as being the most reliable. Sir I have not taken as much as an aspirin since I began drinking Kratom tea. I suffered for years and now I have found a healthy relief. I am one of millions of people that use this supplement that covers many ailments. I refuse to take aspirin by the handful or take the risk of opiate dependency from pain killers. Studies show that this is a very safe plant, and is much safer and would not cause nearly the physical damage that would be caused by me eating Excedrin gell caps everyday.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 2:29:58 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

I am writing to express my deep concern for the implications on my family and community if kratom is indeed banned in the United States.

My name is (b) (6). I am a 32 year old woman living in (b) (6). I have been happily married for 10 years and we have 4 small children at home.

My husband, (b) (6) (age 37), suffers from back pain and leg pain due to a bad car accident in (b) (6). A flatbed tow truck merged into our sedan on the highway. He has been through physical therapy, chiropractic care, and even surgery (in (b) (6)). Nothing has "fixed" his pain, which we are told is the result of a herniated disc which protrudes and rests on a nerve.

(b) (6) has been prescribed pain medication from various care providers he has seen. He is adverse to treating his symptoms this way for a few reasons. One, the pain is not alleviated well enough by these drugs. Two, he dislikes the additional side effects of these drugs. Three, he has seen the destruction of lives by people who have become "hooked" on such drugs.

The only thing that has consistently helped his pain over the past year has been kratom (the "red" strain specifically). He drinks it brewed into a tea. To no longer have access to kratom for pain relief would be very detrimental to (b) (6). During months of the worst pain flare-ups, (b) (6) has been able to maintain his work as a Realtor and enjoy family time (e.g. a day at Legoland with our children). Without kratom to sip on throughout the day, these things would be far more difficult or even impossible. Kratom has improved his quality of life.

I understand that there have been cases of individuals dying after using kratom. In these cases, other substances and/or excessive quantities of kratom were a factor. As we all know, caffeine or alcohol are also problematic when taken to excess or mixed with other drugs, and most members of the population keep this in mind when using these substances.

I personally enjoy a cup or two of kratom here and there. I experience nothing resembling a "high" from using kratom. I feel completely aware of my surroundings, capable of normal conversation, able to drive a vehicle, etc.

I used to be a heavy drinker. I do know what it feels like to be impaired, and the destruction that can cause. I no longer drink at all.

(b) (6) was an even heavier drinker than I, until he also quit completely in 2014.

One of the things we both enjoy about kratom is being able to enjoy a date at a kratom bar without being around drunk people. We have met many others in such bars who have also kicked alcohol or other destructive substances.

These kratom bars provide a valuable service to our community - a calm, positive gathering place for the non-drinkers of our metro area! I would be greatly saddened to see these

establishments run out of business. As kratom is the primary beverage served at these places, I do fear that these entrepreneurs would lose their businesses. I have met several of them personally, and thus far, they have all been very kind, down-to-earth people, excited about having created welcoming places to spend time at in their communities.

Based on my first-hand experience with using kratom, my observation of how much it eases my husband's chronic pain, and the stories shared with me by the other kratom users I know, I wish to strongly discourage you from banning kratom. There are so many other substances - alcohol, for instance - that destroy lives of users (and those that love them) in far greater daily numbers than any issues kratom may have been a factor in.

I thank you for listening to me. I appreciate being able to share my story and reasoning with you.

Please allow us to keep kratom as an option for pain relief and socialization.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 3:49:07 PM

Dear FDA,

My name is (b) (6) I am 57 years old and live in (b) (6). I wanted to write to you to tell you of my support of Kratom, the botanical herb that has been a blessing in my life.

I began adding Kratom to my supplement regimen back in 2014. I suffer from chronic insomnia and I was searching for a natural solution to end what had become a debilitating disease. I had tried many prescription medications which always left me feeling unable to function in the morning and which, more often than not, did not help to relieve the sleepless nights. I don't know which was worse, the feeling of the "hangover" I would have from these medications I was prescribed or the inability to function due to not having any sleep.

Then I found Kratom. Natural, gentle and it works. There were no ill affects. No hangovers. And it gave me a full, uninterrupted sleep. I have now become more health conscious due to Kratom and I have added many more natural herbs to my daily routine because finally, I feel alive.

Kratom has been proven harmless. It is non addictive and it is in the same family as coffee. I am including an 8 factor scientific study for your consideration that has proven Kratom to be safe.

If Kratom were to be banned, many lives would be in jeopardy as Kratom is not only a relief aid for people like myself, but it is also a means to end opiate addiction and withdrawal with amazing success.

Please support the public on their choices of which natural products we might wish to use in our own body. I have found great relief from Kratom and it has literally given me my life back. I am a personal caretaker of abandoned, lost, abused and unwanted animals. Should I lose my ability to continue Kratom for the insomnia I am hampered with, not only will I suffer but my family will suffer as well as the animals I care for. Because I simply cannot function again as I was with this chronic illness.

Thank you for reading this. Please listen to the voices who may reach out to you on this issue. Kratom has truly given me back my life.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Kratom 8 Factor Study

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9ba5da_81de7c70750748f2807bf0d1b96e301d.pdf

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 6:48:33 PM

I am writing for my concerns regarding your stance on kratom. I have been taking this for years. When i dont take it, i may get a little sleepy but THAT'S ALL IT DOES!

I wont tell you my story; suffice to say it is not a unique one.

But i do want to tell you that if this product is removed from freedom to purchase to out and out illegal to possess i will be back on painkillers within minutes. Please do not do that to me.

It is now a republican administration that you represent. One of the most touted aspects of republicans is that they stay out of peoples lives.

So, stay out please.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 6:38:07 PM

Hi,

I am writing to plead with you to help us fight to keep the FDA from banning kratom in the US. I have a disease called PCOS that causes me tremendous pain, lethargy, anxiety and stress on a daily basis. My doctors wanted me to take opiate pain medicine and narcotic anxiety meds and I did research that led me to kratom as a safe, non-addictive and healthy alternative. The opioid epidemic in this country is taking so many lives. It took the life of my best friend this year . After having major surgery, she became addicted to some really strong narcotic pain killers which then eventually led her to heroin and her death. If she had been given Kratom as a natural pain relief , she would still be alive today and healthy . Please help us fight to keep scientific research going on kratom. It is saving hundreds of thousands of lives in this country and others. Thanks, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 8:59:27 PM

Dear sir/madam:

My name is (b) (6) and I am a mother and business owner here in (b) (6). As I am sure you know, Kratom is a plant from South East Asia that helps a lot of people. I want to share my success story with Kratom and hope you hear the many benefits this plant can and will have on many people. I'm only 22 but have been in 5 car accidents. I was prescribed pain killers as a teen after a bad accident and nearly dropped out of school due to being so sedated all the time. I had no choice but to quit them and suffer in pain in order to get my life back on track. That was, until I found Kratom. Now I am a mother of two, business owner and productive member of society, all thanks to Kratom. I no longer suffer in pain, I am no longer dependent on other medications with ill side effects; I am a happy and healthy person again. I have been using Kratom for three years now with no side effects. I have had labs run through my doctors and everything is in a healthy range. This plant is safe and is a very useful tool in combatting the opioid epidemic.

I hope you will see what this plant means to doctors, nurses, lawyers, laborers, parents and grand parents across the country. I thank you for your time and hope that you will stand by me and the millions of Americans who have benefited from this amazing plant.

Thank you again,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 11:02:55 PM

Kratom is a miracle leaf I need it to keep going. Please don't ban it I need it

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and addiction
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 11:25:45 AM

I have used Kratom for more than 2 years at about about 2 grams twice a day.. Taking it as a tea. It helped me cope with a bad relationship breakup and allowed me to continue working on many projects as a licensed contraction in NY. I also was able to restore my dad house so i could put it on the market and sell it.. It just helped keep me positive and forward moving..

It has been 4 months now that i haven't had any Kratom.. There was absolutely no withdrawal issues. The only issue i noticed was that for 4 or 5 days i had a hard time falling asleep, but that passed and my sleep patterns are now normal. I stopped because i wanted to experience what stopping would be like.. I wanted to make sure that it was not an addicting substance because i was recommending it to several friends..

I've concluded with absolutely certainty that Kratom is 100 times less addicting than coffee and sugar.. I have not been able to avoid those two food products so far.

Please give Kratom a fair hearing. It has helped many people with many problems with no detrimental impacts on their health.. Mostly it improves one's outlook towards a more positive view.

As with any controversy there will be rude and reckless people who demand things.. They are a small minority and are to be expected from large populations.. So please listen to the people who are seriously asking you to really weigh the pro's and con's of this plant and give it a chance to continue to give hope to the many who need it.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:14:15 AM

I am 29 years old, I have liver cancer and Crohn's disease. I use kratom for pain management. Nothing offered by doctors such as oxycodone is safe for my liver and without kratom I have no alternative. This is who you are hurting. I urge you to put human beings before profit. The fda has no place banning such a plant.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 10:48:20 AM

Mr. Gottlieb M.D.,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Looking at the health benefits vs. the essentially non-existent risks, I am utterly confused why there is an effort to ban or limit the use of this plant when so many other harmful substances are tolerated or even supported by our government!

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban in (b) (6)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 6:19:54 PM

Hello,

I'll try to keep this brief as possible, but I feel the need to get my story out there...

On the morning of (b) (6) this year, I was involved in a car accident that I should be dead from. After 7 surgeries, fighting pneumonia with a blood clot in one of my lungs, multiple rods and hardware that's left me part bionic, and over an inch of my lower intestines removed, I had a battle in front of me, as I'm fighting this very day.

While in the ICU for a month, I was given doses of morphine every four hours, with Roxy contin between those for breakthrough pain relief.

I left the hospital in enormous pain still, but due to my lack of insurance, they carted me out the door ASAP.

I began taking kratom for pain relief opposed to the oxycodone I was prescribed (mainly because I've been down the road of opiate addiction years ago.) And going through that again is something I never want to deal with again.

Not only have I found kratom to be beneficial for the sometimes excruciating pain I'm enduring to this day; but I've also found it has helped me with my severe depression and anxiety. I was prescribed Prozac and Xanax for those conditions for years. I'm currently not having to take any of them due to this amazing plant that is currently being cast out by the media, dea, and now unfortunately the FDA as being "dangerous".

In order to wrap things up to not take up more of your time, I'll leave it at this.

If kratom is made illegal here in (b) (6) you might as well be digging my grave. I'm not going to get through this now without taking a 100 steps back with a crippling opiate and benzo addiction. I know there's many others out there that are in this very unfortunate situation.

Please consider our lives before passing this ban.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:05:29 AM

Commissioner. I am asking you with sincere heart to please reconsider your stance on this miracle plant kratom. I would like to give a little back story on why I use it. I was in a car accident back in my early 20s and injured 3 lower vertebrae in my back, and both of my knees. After trying to rehab and being put on awful oxycontin and oxycodone to battle pain, I was still living a miserable life, besides feeling sick and depressed because of the side effects of the opiates, I was in constant worry of becoming addicted, I saw it happen, I had people I knew die from opiate overdose, that's when I had enough and turned to kratom and it changed my life, my pain was relieved greatly, my overall outlook towards life changed for the best. I am able to play with my daughter, I am able to sit for longer than just a few minutes now, I can work pain free and all of this without worry of addiction or overdose, all of this because of kratom. If this wonderful plant is banned from entering the USA there will be millions upon millions of people left with either dealing with their pain or going back on a never ending circle of taking different opiates. So please I am begging you to reconsider your stance on kratom, because you will be taking a natural and safe remedy for pain relief from so many. I would also like to add that kratom can and is used for a plethora of different things not only for pain. Thank you greatly for your time and consideration.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Concern
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:10:51 AM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6). I am from (b) (6) and am 26 years old and have served 8 years in the US Army. I am contacting you because I am extremely concerned with the false statements recently made. Kratom is a plant and actually is the solution to the opioid epidemic. First I can say if Kratom becomes banned it truly will make the opioid use dramatically worse. This is the last alternative available and it is being threatened without legitimate reason. I take kratom and I was able to not rely on prescription painkillers for my neuropathy. It not only helps with pain but it is not even close to addictive as the prescriptions. The effects are extremely mild. Kratom cannot kill you and it does not slow your respiratory system. What happens is if you take too much as with most things then you become nauseous but thats it. It also curbs withdrawl symptoms from prescriptions and maybe you personally dont know how it feels but it is excruciating. Again if this last alternative for millions of people is banned you will see that people will turn to street drugs or return to a doctor. Personally Kratom has saved my life. It helps with anxiety and allows me to function normally as well as again helping with my nerve damage. Its hard to understand why alcohol and tobacco is legal when it kills thousands upon thousands a year yet this harmless plant is being threatened that helps people instead. Please look at the scientific evidence that proves Kratom is harmless and actually cannot kill people and you cannot overdose from it. Please take this into consideration and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom concern
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:35:57 PM

Dear Commissioner,

I have a 35 year history of significant chronic pain. Kratom is the one substance that has worked for me and allowed me to continue working and being productive. I am very familiar with the science behind Kratom and I do not understand why is being considered for scheduling as an illegal drug. I have suffered no negative side effects from years of Kratom use. Making this herb illegal will harm many people. Please don't make this move.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Assistant Professor

Communication Disorders and Sciences

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom has saved my life
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 4:33:49 AM

SUBSCRIBE FOR EMAILS



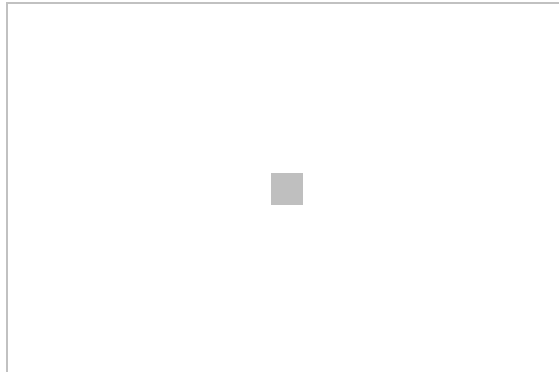
CONTACT

CALL [804-552-1252](tel:804-552-1252)

support@americankratom.org

The American Kratom Association was
formed in 2014 to protect the right of all
Americans to use the natural botanical
Kratom for improved health and well-being.

[LEARN MORE...](#)
[ABOUT US](#)



KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON

Due to todays most recent concerns from our team in Washington DC, we are now being advised to start calling your FEDERAL legislators.... Congress and Senate....

Start calling, writing and

emailing your federal legislators.

Contact Your Congressperson (see letter template)

Find yours

here: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

Contact Your Senator (see letter template)

Find yours

here: <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>

Use the letter template below. However, when writing

Some of the things to be doing as we are working on this **ATTACK**:

WRITE:

Scott Gottlieb M.D.

Commissioner

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

10903 New Hampshire Ave

Silver Spring, MD [20993-0002](http://www.fda.gov)

CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

CALL THE FDA:

"I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332)

FDA Contact [PAGE](#)

EMAIL your story to the FDA:

CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

Letter Template*

**It's important not to copy and paste,
please use your own words*

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

Hi. MY name is (b) (6) im a 32 year old single father from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-In.2004 i was ejected put of a car at 90mph on the highway.my left arm was completely destroyed dangling from my body but a couple tendon. the first hospitaal wanted to amputate. i had them life flight me to maine med snd a amazing surgery he wad able to put my arm back together oh and also tobmention it sucks. si docs had me on a higher amount of opioids than my mother Was on when she Was on her death bed.i obviously became very dependent on them evil opioids so. not knowing anything i decided to.filling thr meds not knowing what hell i. was about to endure. was so.sick i felt like i was.going.to.die. violently.sick still had no.idea it was withdrawals. until someonr gave me.some pills and inimediatly felt better. so i was off and.runnng. ive done.rehabs medications assisted treatment everything but i.discovered kratom when i was working in abheaf shop. i was trying.to.get.off yhe suboxone

and withdrawl from those way worse and takes way longer than withdrawls from a regular opiate like oxy, morphine, heroin. kratom. my first time i was full blown wothdraw and i within a hour i was [able to](#) get up and function! eat do chores it saved my life it got me through hell. i am now two years clean. kratom gives the releif i need with no intoxication no side effects this plant is a god send! it literally gave me my life back. playing with my amazing daughter is making incan do these things

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom help
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 7:48:38 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 29-year old from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about kratom while searching for natural pain remedies. I've broken both of my legs during my younger years and suffer from chronic back pain. I have pain in my knees when I walk and struggle to squat, kneel or bend over. Kratom relieves me of these pains and allows me to live a pain-free life. I also have social anxiety and kratom allows me to relax and feel comfortable around people I don't know. It helps me get outside more. Kratom has given me a better outlook on life. Before I started consuming it, I was depressed, in pain and isolated.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Please help keep this available for all of us who depend on it.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom helps me
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 11:01:52 PM

Please I need Kratom I have bad anxiety and back Pain and I can assure you I will never go on opiods again. Please have a heart so I can live.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom in the US
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 10:45:50 AM

Hello,

I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping an estimated 5 million people ([Huffpost/Wired](#)) suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal and dangerous drugs like heroin. It would also curtail research, of which I am a part. The published literature to date has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression as in opiate overdose. (For example, see Trakulsrichai S, Sathirakul K, Auparakkitanon S, et al. Pharmacokinetics of mitragynine in man. *Drug Design, Development and Therapy*. 2015;9:2421-2429.)

As an academic research chemist, former (b) (6) Police Laboratory Criminalist, and a former Emergency Medical Technician of over ten years, I have a unique perspective on the characteristics of kratom alkaloids and the affects of its use.

I have personally witnessed several people end their use of prescription painkillers such as oxycodone with the use of kratom with no negative symptoms. These people have been able to resume their lives rather than be slaves to their pain or medication. Clearly, further research is required into this efficacious plant, not an outright ban.

Kratom has been demonstrated to be a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my friends' and family members' lives. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/> or please feel free to contact me directly.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

--

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Chemistry Department
Energetics Laboratory

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Regulation
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:28:08 PM

To: Scott Gottlieb M.D.]

Dear Sir,

This letter is to ask that the FDA leave Kratom off the list of scheduled drugs.

I am a 60 yr old man, with chronic back pain and use Kratom tea to successfully manage that pain. Finding Kratom as a treatment has allowed me to avoid the use of other pain killers that have some serious side effects, are expensive and addictive.

I believe the anti-kratom initiatives to be sponsored by the pharmaceutical companies, who will suffer a loss of business as the kratom alternative becomes known. I believe the loss of business would be offset by a decrease in pain-killer addiction and associated loss of life.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saves lives.
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 10:45:07 AM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 34-year old father from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the United states.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Saves
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 7:58:13 PM

Hello, My name is (b) (6) and I encourage you to keep Kratom legal for many honest Americans like you whom use it as a Natural remedy. I discovered Kratom on a thread for herbs to help your liver because i am an alcoholic, I quit cold turkey but could not fight the urge to drink, I finally tried Kratom and haven't drunk in 3 years, nor been sick from kratom. I do not take it everyday, only when i may have an urge to drink, I can now enjoy social occasions Sober. I understand if you want to regulate it in some way, but the vendors inspect it. If you do regulate it please do not make it complicated for me or thousands of others to obtain it, for it is all natural and free of any synthetic substance. Thank you so much.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Support - Please Read
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 6:38:53 AM

Hello Dr. Gottlieb,

I'm writing to follow-up recent comments you've made surrounding Kratom, as it's a plant that myself, along with several others near to me, use as an alternative to pharmaceuticals.

I'm certain your proposed ban on imports, and potential addition to SITSa, is well intended—everything in your career seems to have been devoted to the greater good. That said, even if well-intended, I'm concerned this action would cause lives to be lost. I'm nearly certain several others close to me would return to their “pre-Kratom” state of uneasiness...whether it's alcohol, prescription drugs, or illicit substances; kratom helps steer people away from other significant impediments.

Should it be of any relevance, both my personal physician and mental health professional are aware of my kratom use, and their support is unanimous—though they do insist I get regular check-ups and related blood work with my personal physician to ensure if there's ANY sign of distress to my body, I would take action immediately. Several years in, I've been given the highest possible bill of health (with no alcohol or chemical dependencies to boot).

I would love nothing more than to discuss with you, or an appropriate member of your team. I'm a law abiding, tax paying business professional, and aim to stay within the bounds of the law for the duration of my life. If there is any additional information I can provide, please let me know, and I'll be happy to do so.

All the best,

(b) (6)

From: [\(null\) \(null\)](#)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom.
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 8:45:47 PM

"I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health. With Kratom I'm able to function pain free without the drugged feeling that I get from pain meds. It helps my overall mental state without being on Prozac (which has terrible side affects). I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits." Please understand that Kratom is in the coffee family and has been around for a very long time and is working miracles in so many people's lives who thought they couldn't take another day of pain, addiction, PTSD, depression and so many other things that make it hard to even get up and start our day without that pain. Please keep it available and natural.

Thank you. (b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 11:59:43 PM

Hello. My name is (b) (6). I am a 40 year old recovering alcoholic and addict. I have struggled with alcoholism and addiction to many substances during my life including opiates and benzodiazepine drugs that were prescribed to me, but I became addicted and it spiraled out of control. I'll not go into great detail, but my life became unmanageable for a period of time. I was losing control of myself and it nearly cost me my relationship with my wife and kids. I am doing much better now. One thing that has helped me to keep the drugs and booze in the rear view has been a controversial plant known as kratom. There have been a lot of false claims of kratom being dangerous and I am sure you are aware of these claims. When used responsibly kratom can be beneficial. Especially for many people who are recovering and recovered addicts and alcoholics. People just like me. I know many people who find this to be true. Kratom has worked wonders for many people to get off hardcore opiate drugs such as heroin and other opiate pain medications that has become a horrible epidemic of the current times. There has been news that the FDA is taking steps to schedule kratom as a narcotic which would put in in the same category as heroin and other dangerous drugs. This would be a crisis for me and others like me who use kratom responsibly to help us cope with pain and so much more. I wish I was better at laying this information out. I hope you will listen to and think about the things I have mentioned. Please contact me with any questions you may have for me. Please don't take this amazing plant away from us. Like anything, sure it can be abused and some people will make poor choices about how they choose to handle things. Just like alcohol which is much more dangerous., yet it is everywhere. I will end this message here. Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom: The plant that helps my wellbeing.
Date: Thursday, November 23, 2017 1:52:05 PM

I am a 32 year old nurse. I am married with 3 children. I responsibly use Kratom to help with my PTSD, chronic pain and anxiety. This supplement has given me my life back, after years of being so anxious and in pain from various medical conditions. When I take Kratom I do not feel under the influence and it doesn't affect my decision making- unlike prescription medications. I have been utilizing this supplement for over 3 years. I have never experienced negative side effects, and all lab work done by my primary care doctor has always been within normal limits. Kratom should not be made illegal, because that would take away my quality of life; as well as take away the quality of life of so many other citizens of the United States.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Letter regarding Kratom Warning
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 7:30:40 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I'm writing to you in response to the FDA warning that was issued concerning Kratom on November 14th, 2017. My name is (b) (6) and I'm a severely disabled former member of military special operations, having worked as a (b) (6) in the US Air Force between 2006 and 2017. I proudly served in this role spanning 4 combat tours in Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa, having administered cutting edge trauma care to injured soldiers and other members of special operations spanning 70 combat missions. I was disabled in a parachuting incident on (b) (6) and spent three years awaiting retirement in various surgeries, physical therapy offices, ending in a stint in a traumatic brain injury and combat PTSD rehabilitation center.

I researched and started to use Kratom about a year ago to help with chronic pain associated with a complex spinal chord injury, a failed spine surgery, and having had most joints in my body surgically reconstructed. It was very important to me that I find a supplement or medication that enabled me to get out of bed in the morning and maintain daily function, but one which would not blunt me emotionally so that I could engage in evidence based PTSD treatment. Any pain medication which contributes to the emotional numbness associated with combat PTSD will compound the recovery process, which is why I ended my opiate pain medication when I discovered I was struggling with this condition. Kratom allowed me to both get out of bed in the morning and engage in meaningful PTSD therapy. If my access to this plant is taken away, it will be difficult on many fronts to continue to engage in this therapy, or even make it to church on Sunday. What a tragedy that will be.

I implore you to listen to the "troops on the ground" and to allow the medical research to catch up to what so many people already know about the multi-faceted uses for Kratom. Early in the Afghanistan war, we as special operations medical practitioners were criticized for using "unorthodox" medications and techniques like low dose Ketamine for pain control and aggressive tourniquets and hemostatic agents, which went on to become accepted in the mainstream after a mounting body of evidence suggested that, in fact, we were on to something and saved thousands of lives despite the naysayers. These early techniques literally turned the tide of combat medicine. Having used hundreds of compounds on other people as well as myself during my time in service, I can say first hand that Kratom has very unique properties and great potential to help so many people in need.

Thousands of disabled combat troops will suffer immeasurably, and thousands more which could have potentially been helped by this plant will never have access if Kratom is banned. I would ask that you consider my professional opinion, as well as that of doctors, nurses and other practitioners, and be patient to allow a now growing body of research to reach maturity before making any fast decisions. The social and political pressure on you and your colleagues right now is enormous in the wake of the opiate crisis. You know as well as I, that in this kind of environment it is more important than ever to do a careful review of the existing literature as well as listen to those who are strongly advocating an informed second

opinion. I pray this will be the case, and I thank you for your service to this nation during a difficult time.

Regards,

(b) (6), former USAF (b) (6) Team Leader

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:12:15 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 27-year old female from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-i started using kratom to come away from other dangerous things.

-I've been using kratom for 3 years and it helps my energy levels pain and I dont have to take prescription pills anymore.

it has given me my life back, i have gone back to work, i can play with my family, exercise or travel, and go ro stores without having anxiety. kratom is important and should be available to anyone.

- Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:12:15 PM

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

— (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:12:31 PM

To whom it may concern. I am an adult who uses kratom and I tell you this is ridiculous to take kratom away. It had improved my life 1000 fold and if you pull this away from millions it's going to be hell. I pray y'all reconsider and leave this plant alone as it has made millions of lives better and easier and safer. Leave kratom alone it needs to be left alone. Thank you for your time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 8:45:12 PM

Kratom

Helped my son this past Sept

He was living on the streets of (b) (6) in (b) (6)

Could not get off of heroin

A smoke shop vendor in (b) (6) took him in and gave him a sample

It helped my son tremendously

He took it to relieve the sickness

He didn't do it to get another high

He looked online for dosage instructions

He helped my son of 26 very much

He had 1 sample pouch and it worked

He didn't take anymore after that long day

He's sober today 40 days clean

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:13:29 PM

I'm a 36 year old mother of 4. I have used Kratom now for almost a year. All I can say about it is it's not an opioid alternative. It's not for everyone, it's a lot weaker, but it also is another choice for pain relief and depression. The FDA is aware of the opioid epidemic they say they want to do something about it, save lives. Well here's your chance. Let this plant, that is being criticized as a death drug, show it's real potential. Let our voice be heard, the ones who know it's worth. The ones who rely on it. No longer and I'm just another statistic, will I die of an overdose cause my pain meds are too weak, not right, not enough, so I need more, no I can't do that, if I'm short at pill count I'll be kicked out, but I'm in so much pain, what do I do??? Take more? Well that can cause death! Taking too much Kratom only causes nausea. That's it. PLEASE let the ones who need it and take it for the right reasons have the right to take it!!!! I can promise you, if it's taken away, lives will be lost, ones may commit suicide. Others with buy drugs off the street, it will not solve anything, only make it worse, PLEASE prove to the people you care about us! Keep Kratom legal for us!!!! (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Need your help
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:50:12 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I used to have severe anxiety attack disorder. I was on Dr prescribed poison better known as xanax and it was killing me while making me addicted. I thought my life was over and things were just getting worst as i was beginning to be a nuisance on my family. I couldn't be on xanax at work and it was terrifying. I am an industrial automation technician. I actually wondered if death would be better but then a friend introduced me to all natural Kratom. Since that day 4 years ago i have been alive, free and a happy productive person. I'm one of the best employees and i never miss work. I feel confident. I've even been on trips to other countries and scuba diving. I don't abuse it. All it takes is a quarter teaspoon of kratom in tea in the morning and i feel great all day. Never less never more. I'm telling you, if you let this miracle plant become inaccessible to the people who suffer from pain, addiction, anxiety and depression you will be only helping to line the big pharmaceutical companies pocket. It'll really hurt the people who found a natural and safe way out of their pain. It'll definitely hurt those who use it to treat opioid dependency and they'll relapse. I hope you'll do what's best for people and not profits. America needs you. Thanks.

Sent via the Samsung GALAXY S® 5, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Please Don't Ban Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:13:44 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I am writing to you to regarding the herb Kratom. There has been much debate about its effects and safety, citing kratom as responsible for 36 deaths, a claim which is exaggerated if not just completely false, as those who died while consuming kratom were also utilizing illegal or prescription drugs.

A long-time sufferer of depression and anxiety, I have been utilizing kratom for nearly a year along with a doctor-prescribed mild antidepressant, which did not seem to work well on its own. Kratom does not make me feel giddy or euphoric. It simply helps me to see life more optimistically and to give me the drive and energy I need to live my life.

There are some who say that kratom is as addictive as any recreational drug, but in fact, overuse is inherently difficult because the body simply stops responding in the same way, effectively making kratom inactive. It also does not cause any symptoms of withdrawal if one stops taking it. In fact, I used kratom to help me quit drinking alcohol, to which I had an extreme addiction, so far from being addictive itself, kratom can help reduce dependency on other drugs. I know several people who were addicted to opiates and have successfully used kratom to stop using and to stay off of them.

Some of those who oppose the legality of kratom have wrongly said that the herb is like an opiate, causing those who take it to feel as they would on heroin or painkillers. My husband was addicted to heroin many years ago, and though he has not used that drug in twenty-five years, he remembers what it felt like to use heroin and can say with certainty that kratom does not in any way affect a person in the way that opioids do. He suffers from an inoperable bone spur in his neck which often causes him severe pain.

He utilizes kratom to combat the pain, much as one would use an opioid painkiller but without the side effects of addiction or a change in personality. So when people say that "kratom is like an opioid" they are correct in that it can reduce pain like an opioid, but beyond that there is no similarity between kratom and opium-based drugs.

This country is currently in the grip of opioid addiction, much of which has been caused by the overprescribing of medications like OxyContin. This medication is responsible for exposure to the "feel good" elements of opioid drugs to people who would never have purposely set out to try heroin or cocaine. They simply went to the dentist to have a tooth pulled, were prescribed a Class 2 pain medication and the result was a lifelong addiction to opioids.

Kratom is not the cause of nor does it contribute to the opiate problem in this country. But it has proved useful to people who are suffering. Please don't ban it.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please help keep kratom legal
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 2:54:59 AM

Dear Sir,

I hope you take the time to read my story.

I am a 39 year old mother of two, married to a police officer, in (b) (6). I am not your conventional drug addict, I am a pain management doctor created addict.

I hope you will do everything in your power to keep kratom legal because kratom has given me my life back, kratom has given my kids their mom back, kratom has given my husband his wife back. I was on pain medication for a decade and over the years my tolerance went up and so did the amount of pills I had to take a day. I am a chronic pain sufferer because I have a 30% curve in my spine from scoliosis and I had a stroke. I went to several doctors over the years and tried everything to stop the pain and nothing helped and then because of my stroke history, doctors were afraid to touch me and instead gave me more and more pills. I eventually lost control and my brain and body kept telling me that I needed more and more. I started going through my script to fast and suffered withdrawals constantly. I finally gave up on self control and poured my sole out to my husband. I literally thought I was going to die from an overdose. My husband was amazing and looked for help and this is how I ended up on suboxone. The transition from pain medication to suboxone is a whole other nightmare. I describe it nothing short of an exorcism. Once on it, I hated suboxone from the first day I took it. I was an instant zombie. My husband just kept telling me that I wasn't the same person I used to be. I decided to start googling and this is how I found kratom, the best decision I have ever made. At first I thought these people in the kratom Facebook groups were crazy. How could a natural plant take withdrawals away and help me with my pain but I was to the point where I had nothing to lose. I placed my first order and when it came in the mail I figured if it failed, at least I tried. I was on a high dose of suboxone but I tapered down to 6 mg and on July 21, 2017 I made the "jump". I took my last dose of suboxone and when it came time to take my next dose I took kratom instead and would you believe it, it worked. Every time I felt withdrawals I took another dose and the withdrawals would go away! The withdrawals were the strongest for about 12 days so I had to take doses of kratom every 2 to 3 hours even through the night to keep the withdrawals away but I could feel the kratom was winning. Can you believe that there is a drug like suboxone that actually stays in your system that long? And causes you physical pain? And is supposed to be a better alternative than kratom?

Once the suboxone was completely out of my system on day 12 the most amazing thing happened. I was sitting on the floor in my living room with my two boys and I looked at my husband and I realized my back wasn't hurting! I was actually sitting there pain free! Kratom works better as a pain reliever than any of the Norcos or Percocets or opanas that I was on for years!

I have to tell you something else. On (b) (6) I had a hysterectomy. I was in the hospital and I have to admit that my pain management made addict mind was a little excited that I was going to get some pain medication. I had the procedure and I was given iv pain medication and also Percocets and kept in the hospital over night. Now this is the crazy part! I felt absolutely horrible! I hated it! I hated being on the pain medication so much. When I got home I went home with a prescription and I did fill it and I took it for the first day. I honestly thought that at some point my old self was going to start to love it again but it never happened. On day 3 I felt so awful I gave up, I switched back to kratom and gave up the pills, I instantly started feeling better. I still have the bottle sitting in my medicine cabinet and when I went for my 2 week follow up my doctor told me he's never seen someone walk in looking so good after surgery. I told him that I've been feeling great!

This plant, kratom, really helps with so many things. It helps get people off of so many prescriptions that are like handcuffs. Prescriptions that loose their effects and really just become a dependency because of the fears of withdrawals. Please, do whatever you can to please keep kratom legal. If you have questions or want to talk about any of this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I am kratom!

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep Kratom Legal
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 8:08:37 AM

To whom it may concern:

I used to be an EMT and hurt my back while on the job. I am now a pastor. I take kratom to help with my chronic back pains.

It is the only thing that has allowed me to be ADDITCTION FREE without having to take prescription hard painkillers.

By banning kratom you are negatively affecting my life and I am an American tax payer and productive member of the society.

Asking you to re-consider.

(b) (6)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Save Kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 12:57:21 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 30 year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I use Kratom due to a nerve injury sustained in my left hand that has left it numb and painful. I continually experience chronic neuropathic pain. In the past my doctor prescribed opioid pain killers such as oxycotin and hydrocodone to help deal with the pain. However, I do not wish to take them anymore because of their potential for addiction and deleterious side-effects. As such I use kratom on my bad pain days and I experience no withdrawal upon stopping. Plus since it is natural and has a ceiling of use, I am never afraid of accidentally taking too much as it is impossible to overdose on. The withdrawal from kratom is virtually non-existent (unlike the pain killers I used to be on) and it is mild enough that it in no way impacts my day-to-day work and living.

Kratom has helped give me back my life. It helps me deal with the pain and constant numbness I experience in my hand. It let's my mind not have to focus all it's attention on how my hand feels, and allows me up to be a more productive and useful member of society. It is also lets me use my hand in a more complete way without worrying about exacerbating my pain.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please stop the attack on kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 11:02:32 AM

In light of recent attack by the FDA on Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) a plant for healing and well being that falsely claims kratom as dangerous I would like to please ask for your full support to stop the demonizing of this beneficial plant and your support in maintaining the right for Americans to choose to use kratom as a tool for their well being. This is a plant helps millions live a better life when other conventional means we're not able too. On contrary to what the DEA and FDA have been saying about it which that it poses a public health threat, when in fact there is scientific and anecdotal evidence to support that kratom is indeed safe and has multiple health benefits. Though I do agree with the FDA trying to protect the public I do firmly believe they are making a mistake in trying to stop Americans in consuming this plant. With your help I certain that we can help maintain the right for Americans to utilize this plant, and shed light into the benefits kratom can provide and stop the false demonization of it.

As for myself I am a responsible hard working American that sufferers from depression and anxiety, that no medications helped me. I was placed on lorazepam, lamotrigine, I was placed on klonopin for two years on a high 4mg dose per day dose and my anxiety panic attacks got worse. I lived my life in fear of nothing of just the fear itself that comes with panic attacks. My dream was to become a psychologist to help people with similar conditions and also help children with disabilities such as down syndrome, autism and learning disabilities. In the end because of my anxiety disorder and the medication that I was on I couldn't keep going to school due to the fact that I couldn't hold any memories because of klonopin, I was always half asleep. I had lost myself. I lost my career because of the medication I was on and I no longer could have my dream come true which was to help those people in need. I found kratom researching for alternatives and for two years now I am free of all medications and so much better and healthier. I was able to get a job right away as an Teacher assistant for special education and then got promoted as an instructional specialist also in the special education field. Now with the help of kratom I am able to achieve my dream of working helping students with disabilities and kratom allowed me to be healthy to have a clear mind and be a hardworking contributing member of society. Please consider the people this will affect and the good this wonderful plant has to offer. We are hardworking citizens not criminals.

I will provide you with the 8-factor analysis done by Pinney Associates on Kratom in an attachment. Please review in the attachment

Thank You

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Kratom Legality
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:22:30 PM

I would just like to formally urge you to fight against the illegalization of Kratom on a state or national level. Kratom is a leaf from southeast Asia that can replace things like opiate painkillers, without being a harmful opiate painkiller. It's ability to not only fight pain, but help people get off of opiates makes it a godsend of a plant that we could absolutely use to help us back out of the opioid crisis. Hundreds of thousands of Americans choose to take Kratom over painkillers because of it's immensely more healthy effect on the body. I am not saying that Kratom is necessarily perfectly healthy, just that hundreds of thousands of people would feel very inclined to go back to things like heroin and oxycontin if their Kratom was taken from them. For no real reason other than the greed of pharmaceutical companies. The FDA has a patent on synthetic kratom, and it seems that their goal is to make kratom illegal so that they can patent the synthetic analog as a miracle natural solution to the opioid crisis. This selfishness potentially could raise the level of opiate related overdoses by a lot more than you might think. This propaganda that the FDA is releasing has repeatedly been attacked as false information and the kratom community as a whole awaits the FDA's response. I appreciate your time, and I would really appreciate your consideration in helping us fight this battle for the sake of thousands of ex addicts, veterans, and chronic pain sufferers all over America.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Recent Attacks On Kratom
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 6:04:08 PM

My name is (b) (6) I am 29 years old and live in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that are also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I discovered Kratom through reading online articles, and decided after doing some research that it would be beneficial to use to to relieve my pain. Since the age of 3 I have battled chronic health problems, which have created more issues as I've aged. These issues include two compression fractures, a replaced left hip, and knee surgery to repair avascular necrosis within my right knee, as well as frequent migraines. Before Kratom I lived in a state of constant discomfort and pain, especially because my job requires me to be on my feet all day.

Kratom has helped give me my life back. On days where I am in considerable pain, all I need to do is take a small dose and my pain recedes. Before Kratom I took the full dose of Tylenol the only thing I can take due to my Nephrotic Syndrome, sometimes I would take more than the allotted safe recommended dose. With Kratom all I need to do is take one, to at most two doses during the day on the worst. Unlike my days with Tylenol waiting hopelessly for it to kick in.

I believe Kratom to be a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely, (b) (6),

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Stop the unscientific attacks on kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:47:32 PM
Attachments: [9ba5da_5a326244df824bc984121783fdc4a65c.pdf](#)

In light of recent attack by the FDA on Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) a plant for healing and well being that falsely claims kratom as dangerous I would like to please ask for your full support to stop the demonizing of this beneficial plant and your support in maintaining the right for Americans to choose to use kratom as a tool for their well being. This is a plant helps millions live a better life when other conventional means we're not able too. On contrary to what the DEA and FDA have been saying about it which that it poses a public health threat, when in fact there is scientific and anecdotal evidence to support that kratom is indeed safe and has multiple health benefits. Though I do agree with the FDA trying to protect the public I do firmly believe they are making a mistake in trying to stop Americans in consuming this plant. With your help I certain that we can help maintain the right for Americans to utilize this plant, and shed light into the benefits kratom can provide and stop the false demonization of it.

As for myself I am a responsible hard working American that sufferers from depression and generalized anxiety disorder. I was placed on a combination of lamotrigine and lorazepam for years then got switched over to klonopin. for two years i was on a high dose of klonopin which didn't help me but numbed me and made forgetful and didn't take away my anxiety or panic attacks. I lived my life in fear of nothing of just the fear itself and fear of the panic attacks. My dream was to become a psychologist to help people with similar conditions as mine and help children with disabilities such as down syndrome, autism and learning disabilities. In the end because of my anxiety disorder and the medication that I was on I couldn't keep going to school due to the fact that I couldn't hold any memories because of klonopin, I was always half asleep in class that i ended up failing classes that i had to drop out. I had lost myself. I lost my career because of the medication I was on and I no longer could have my dream come true which was to help those people in need. I found kratom researching for alternatives and for two years now I am free of all medications and so much better, happier and healthier. I was able to get a job right away after starting supplementing with kratom as an Teacher assistant for special education and then a year after got promoted as an instructional specialist also in the special education field. Now with the help of kratom I am able to work in achieving my dream of working helping students with disabilities and kratom allowed me to be healthy, to have a clear mind and be a hardworking contributing member of society. I'm able to help those students that need someone how to prepare for life after high school and to me that is its my greatest passion. to serve my community and those who need the most. Kratom has allowed me to stay on top of my job, to keep moving higher and to give these students so much more than i would of being on those anti anxiety medication. I don't want to lose this and not being able to provide these students with the help they need and deserve because of my anxiety and depression or because i would have to return to using medications. Please consider the people this will affect and the good this wonderful plant has to offer. We are hardworking citizens not criminals.

There is so much scientific evidence and to show that kratom as a low risk profile and low potential for abuse.

I will provide you with the 8-factor analysis done by Pinney Associates on Kratom in an

attachment. Please review in the attachment

Thank You

(b) (6)

Assessment of Kratom under the CSA Eight Factors and Scheduling Recommendation

November 28, 2016

Contents

List of In-Text Tables.....	4
List of Abbreviations	5
1 Summary, Interpretation, and Discussion of Abuse Potential Data	13
2 Analysis of Kratom under the CSA 8 Factors	21
3 Review of the Eight Factors of the Controlled Substances Act	21
3.1 Factor 1: Its actual or relative potential for abuse.....	21
3.1.1 Animal Data on Drug Discrimination and Reinforcement.....	23
3.1.2 Summary of Factor 1	30
3.2 Factor 2: Scientific evidence of its pharmacological effect, if known	31
3.3 Factor 3: The state of current scientific knowledge regarding the drug or other substance	33
3.4 Factor 4: Its history and current pattern of abuse.....	35
3.4.1 History	35
3.4.2 Federal Surveys	37
3.4.3 Other Federal Data Sources.....	38
3.5 Factor 5: The scope, duration, and significance of abuse	40
3.5.1 Internet monitoring.....	41
3.5.2 Dr. Oliver Grundmann Preliminary Report on Kratom Use and the Health Impact of Kratom Consumption – An online anonymous survey.....	44
3.5.3 Testimonials Regarding Benefits.....	46
3.6 Factor 6: What, if any, risk there is to the public health.....	46
3.6.1 American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System (AAPCC-NPDS)	48
3.6.2 Pediatric/Child (less than 6 years of age) exposure related adverse events and deaths.	48
3.6.3 Ex-US Safety/Toxicity Data	51
3.6.4 Deaths Possibly Involving Kratom	52
3.7 Factor 7: Its psychic or physiological dependence liability	55
3.8 Factor 8: Whether the substance is an immediate precursor of a substance already controlled under this subchapter	56
4 Recommendation	56
5 Conclusion	65
6 References.....	65
Attachment A: Testimonies of Kratom Consumers.....	75

List of In-Text Tables

Table 1. Number of units that would be required to achieve discrimination and reinforcement from several over-the-counter products.	26
Table 2. Number of Unweighted Cases of Kratom, Aspirin and Diphenhydramine Reported to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2010-2014.	38
Table 3. National Semiannual Estimates of Selected Opiate and Related Drug Reports in NFLIS, 2009-2014.	40
Table 4. Verbatim accounts from Internet reports from a website that typically attracts people with histories of diverse substance use and abuse to describe their experiences	41

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
7-OH-MG	7-Hydroxymitragynine
8FA	Summary Analysis of the 8 Factors
AAPCC-NPDS	American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System
AKA	American Kratom Association
APA	American Psychiatric Association
CA ²⁺	Calcium
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNS	Central Nervous System
CPP	Conditioned Place Preference
CSA	Controlled Substances Act
DAWN	Drug Abuse Warning Network
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DSM-5	The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition
EC ₅₀	Median Effective Concentration
E _{max}	Maximal Efficacy
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FDCA	Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
g	Gram
GI	Gastrointestinal

Abbreviation	Definition
h	Hour
i.p.	Intraperitoneal
IC ₅₀	Inhibitory Concentration of 50%
kg	Kilogram
MeOH	Methanol
mg	Milligram
MG	Mitragynine
MTF	Monitoring the Future
N	Number
N/A	Not Applicable
NEISS-CADES	National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-Cooperative Adverse Drug Event Surveillance
NFLIS	National Forensic Laboratory Information System
NIDA	National Institute on Drug Abuse
nM	Nanomolar
NSAIDS	Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs
NSDUH	National Survey on Drug Use and Health
p.o.	By Mouth, Orally
s.c.	Subcutaneously
SAE	Serious Adverse Event
SE	Southeast
SG	Surgeon General
SR	Sustained Release
TEDS	Treatment Episode Datasets
THC	Tetrahydrocannabinol
US or U.S.	United States

Abbreviation	Definition
USC	United States Code
δ	Delta
κ	Kappa
μ	Mu
μM	Micromolar

Definitions

Term	Definition
Abuse potential (liability)	<p>Abuse potential, often referred to as abuse liability, is the term used to describe the risk that a substance carries for sustaining self-administration due to central nervous system effects that are typically reinforcing and often pleasant, yet associated with harm. From a regulatory perspective abuse potential is evaluated by 8 factors listed in the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) for the purpose of determining if a substance or drug meets criteria for placement in the CSA and regulation as a controlled substance. In that case, the level or severity of abuse potential is a factor in determining how restrictively a substance or new drug should be regulated. Many substances that are not placed in the CSA have noteworthy levels of abuse potential, e.g. caffeine, nicotine, nutmeg, various antihistamines, glues, whipped-cream aerosols, salvia, and dextromethorphan (active ingredient in many cough suppressants) (Hanson, 2014; See discussion in FDA 2010b and NIDA, https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/finder/t/160/DrugFacts).</p>
Addiction	<p>Addiction is often used interchangeably with terms such as dependence and substance use disorder (see further on in definitions). Addiction is generally defined as a primary, chronic, neurobiologic disease, with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. It is characterized by behaviors that include one or more of the following: impaired control over drug use, compulsive use, continued use despite harm, and craving. This definition of addiction has been accepted by the American Academy of Pain Medicine, the American Pain Society and the American Society of Addiction Medicine. See also O'Brien, 2011.</p> <p>The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) focuses more on the research and mechanisms of addiction in its definition. It defines addiction as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences. It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain—they change its structure and function. These brain changes can be long-lasting, and can lead to the harmful behaviors seen in people who abuse drugs.</p>

Term	Definition
	NIDA, and many others, consider addiction to be equivalent to a severe substance use disorder as defined in the APA DSM-5 (see https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/media-guide/science-drug-abuse-addiction-basics).
Eight Factors of the CSA which must be analyzed for scheduling recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Actual and relative potential for abuse (2) Scientific evidence of its pharmacological effects (3) State of the current scientific knowledge regarding the drug (4) History and current pattern of abuse (5) Scope, duration, and significance of abuse (6) Public health risk (7) Psychic or physiologic dependence potential (8) Whether the drug is an immediate precursor of a controlled substance
Controlled Substances Act Drug Schedules	<p>Placement of a substance in the CSA is often referred to as being “scheduled” because it must be placed in one of the five drug schedules based on the 8-Factor Analysis of the CSA.</p> <p>Schedule I (C-I): Substances that do not have an accepted medical use and have a high abuse potential and/or were designated for C-I in the 1970 CSA, e.g., heroin, LSD, GHB, “bath salts,” cannabis. Special DEA license and other requirements are required for research.</p> <p>Schedules II-V: For substances (drugs) that have an accepted medical use (typically approved for medical use by the FDA). C-II is for substances with the highest abuse and physical dependence potential and overall risk characterization; C-V is for substances with the lowest abuse potential and lowest dependence potential and risk.</p> <p>C-II includes morphine, amphetamine, pentobarbital, methadone, oxycodone, nabilone, phencyclidine.</p> <p>C-III includes buprenorphine, ketamine, secobarbital, Xyrem, dronabinol, chlorphentermine.</p> <p>C-IV includes tramadol, diazepam, phenobarbital, mazindol, pentazocine, sibutramine, butorphanol.</p> <p>C-V includes low dose codeine, lacosamide, pregabalin.</p>
Kratom	A plant of the species <i>Mitragyna speciosa</i> , including its leaves, and any product derived solely from this plant, including kratom powder and tea brewed from kratom. Two alkaloid components of kratom are MG and 7-OH-MG. Scheduling either or both of these alkaloids under CSA would also have the effect of

Term	Definition
	controlling kratom and kratom products. In this analysis, the term “kratom” will be used as the umbrella term to refer to the plant product, its extracts, MG, 7-OH-MG, and/or manufactured products that include any of the foregoing, unless more specific terms (e.g., “MG” or “leaves”) are used.
Substance Use Disorder (Drug Dependence)	“Substance Use Disorder” formerly termed “Dependence” by the APA is a cluster of cognitive, behavioral, and physiological symptoms indicating that the individual continues use of the substance despite significant substance-related problems. Substance Use Disorder requires a pattern of repeated self-administration that can result in tolerance, withdrawal, and compulsive drug taking behavior. Specific diagnostic criteria are listed in the DSM-5 (APA, 2013). DSM-III and DSM-IV had included a less severe form of dependence termed abuse (APA, 1980, 1994) which was discarded in DSM-5.
Overdose or drug poisoning death	<p>At a general level, the term overdose can and is loosely used by individuals, the media, and often health care professionals any time that a substance was used in greater than intended amounts and/or produced undesirable effects attributed to the amount of the substance. Use of the term overdose as a cause of death is unfortunately also often loosely used, and this is not helpful in efforts to document actual cause of death, analyze trends, or guide efforts to control and prevent such effects, particularly if the attribution was incorrect. Many substance-related overdose deaths involve combinations of substances such as alcohol, sedatives, and opioids and it is often not clear which substance should be listed as the primary cause of death (Gudin et al., 2013; Rudd et al., 2016; Ossiander, 2014). Furthermore, other physical conditions and disease states may contribute to death associated with drug administration.</p> <p>Thus, many factors contribute to determining whether a death resulted from sufficient drug exposure to justify considering the death a drug poisoning death, and to which drug or substance the death should be attributed if it is plausible that more than one substance was taken. Forensic toxicology experts and medical examiners recommend a variety of criteria to determine the most appropriate description of the involvement of a substance in the death, but these are not always followed. Thus, deaths attributed in the media as an overdose due to one</p>

Term	Definition
	<p>specific substance on the basis that the substance was present may be incorrectly attributed to overdose. The following categorizations of the nature or level of involvement of a substance in a death are used in many medical examiner and emergency medicine reports:</p> <p>Causative: The substance is unequivocally responsible for illness or death.</p> <p>Probable cause of death: Death is a known complication of the administered substance and the clinical picture is in keeping with previous experience and reports, provided other causes of death have been reasonably eliminated.</p> <p>Possible cause of death: The clinicopathologic picture could be caused by the drug in question, but it could just as easily be caused by some other process found in the decedent; assigning the drug in question as the cause of death would be unique and warrant publication in the medical literature.</p> <p>Coincidental: The substance happens to be present but has no bearing on illness or death.</p> <p>Negative: The substance is not detected.</p> <p>(See discussion in http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1680257-overview#a9; Cone et al., 2003, 2004; FDA, 2010a).</p>
Tolerance	<p>Tolerance is defined for diagnostic purposes by the APA (2013) as the need for greatly increased amounts of the substance to achieve intoxication (or the desired effect) or a markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount of the substance (FDA, 2010a).</p>

Term	Definition
Withdrawal	<p>Withdrawal is defined for diagnostic purposes by the APA (2013) as follows: The essential feature is the development of a substance-specific problematic behavioral change, with physiological and cognitive concomitants, that is due to the cessation or reduction in heavy and prolonged substance use.</p> <p>Withdrawal symptoms, which are generally opposite of the acute effects of the substance, vary greatly across the classes of substance, and separate criteria sets for withdrawal are provide for most classes (FDA, 2010a).</p> <p>Note that pharmacologists generally consider withdrawal signs and symptoms to be the consequence of physical dependence and a measure of physical dependence. Physical dependence is the state of adaptation or neuroadaptation (tolerance) in which relatively normal functioning has come to be dependent upon continued drug administration. This is sometimes described as “the resetting of homeostatic mechanisms in response to chronic drug exposure” (e.g., O’Brien, 1996, 2011).</p> <p>The presence of withdrawal does not necessarily mean that the person was addicted as defined earlier or had a diagnosable substance use disorder by APA DSM-5 criteria. For example, many opioid treated pain patients develop tolerance and physical dependence and must be gradually tapered off their medication to minimize withdrawal discomfort yet show no evidence of craving, drug seeking, or behaviors indicative of substance use disorder or addiction. Furthermore, individuals can become physically dependent on the effects of a drug used for lowering blood pressure (FDA, 2010a) but which do not cause substance use disorders or addiction. Caffeine may cause APA DSM-5 diagnosable intoxication and withdrawal disorders, but the DSM-5 does not include substance use disorder category for caffeine because the clinical significance of chronic caffeine use and diagnostic criteria have not been established (Hasin et al., 2013) as would be needed to distinguish a substance use disorder from a common life-style and or life enhancing behavior.</p>

1 Summary, Interpretation, and Discussion of Abuse Potential Data

We have developed this summary analysis of the eight factors (8FA) of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to determine if placement of kratom or its alkaloids, mitragynine (MG) or 7- Hydroxymitragynine (7-OH-MG) in the CSA is warranted, and the impact such placement would have on the public health. Equally importantly, we are developing this review to assist the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in their efforts to find the most appropriate regulatory framework to permit appropriate use, minimize unintended effects, encourage research, and contribute to the enhancement of public health.

Although MG and 7-OH-MG have sometimes been referred to as “opioids,” in this document the term “opioid” will only be used to refer to molecules and products that are opioids as defined by the CSA, which identifies opioids as substances with addiction-forming or addiction-sustaining liability similar to morphine, or substances capable of conversion into drugs with such liability. See 21 USC 802(18); *see also* 21 USC 812(c) (scheduling opium, opium derivatives, and opiates, including opium extracts and derivatives of thebaine); 21 CFR 1308.12 (same). This definition excludes kratom and its alkaloids.¹ It is clear that the abuse potential and harmfulness of kratom and its alkaloids are substantially lower than that of morphine and other opioids and differ in other ways as well, such as physiologic manifestations. In fact, as discussed in this review and in other authoritative reviews, the mitragynines have unique and mixed actions that include mild or “caffeine-like” stimulant effects at low to moderate levels of consumption, and are more likely to enhance occupational performance and social interactions than to interfere with such. In this analysis, the term “kratom” will be used as the umbrella term to refer to the plant product, its extracts, MG, 7-OH-MG, and/or manufactured products that include any of the foregoing, unless more specific terms (e.g., “MG” or “leaves”) are used.

Mitragyna speciosa is a tropical deciduous tree within the coffee family (*Rubiaceae*) that is indigenous to Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam. Traditionally Southeast Asia laborers have used small quantities of kratom throughout the workday for the energizing and minor pain-relieving (minor aches and pains) effects. Kratom has been safely consumed as a dietary supplement, a natural remedy, and in food preparation in Southeast Asia for centuries (Tanguay,

¹ This is also consistent with DEA’s prior determination that emergency scheduling, reserved for substances other than those already controlled in the CSA, including those defined as opioids, was an available statutory pathway for control of kratom, including MG and 7-OH-MG.

2011). It generally is consumed orally in the form of consumer brewed tea-like preparations and powdered kratom leaves that are placed in the mouth or on other foods and are washed down with a liquid. In Southeast Asia, chewing fresh leaves and sometimes dried leaves is also very common, and there are many variants on liquid preparations and some swallowable semisolid preparations made by consumers and various vendors. There is very little evidence demonstrating kratom use through other routes of administration that predominate for opioids in Southeast Asia (e.g., smoking and injecting) despite the long history of wide-spread consumption of kratom. Similarly, in the US, there is little evidence of kratom consumption in forms other than liquid preparations or powdered leaf material that is swallowed with food or liquids. This is in striking contrast to what has been observed for opioids, stimulants, cannabis, nicotine, and other substances of abuse. In fact, for opioids in particular, FDA has actively sought to incentivize the development of products resistant to tampering due to the common and dangerous practice of tampering with oral opioid medications for abuse by nasal insufflation, smoking, and injecting (FDA, 2015; Schnoll and Henningfield, 2016).

The scientific and ethnographic literature often describes consumption as primarily motivated by the “useful,” “beneficial,” “labor sustaining,” “therapeutic,” “mood” and “well-being” enhancing, and “instrumental” benefits, as well as dependence (Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016). The rates of dependence among kratom users in Southeast Asia are not known; however, as discussed in Factor 5, kratom consumers and others regard the practice as more benign and more likely to enhance occupational demands and social functioning in contrast to opioid use which is generally regarded as impairing occupational and social functions (Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016). There are parallels in reported motivation between consumption of kratom and consumption of coffee, tea, and other caffeinated beverages, which are often reportedly used for sustaining performance and for alerting effects, mood enhancement, weight control, relief of headaches, and other benefits (Addicott, 2014; Borota et al., 2014; Cappelletti et al., 2015; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013). As with caffeinated beverages, high dose chronic kratom consumption can lead to use consistent with dependence with difficulty abstaining, as well as apparent withdrawal symptoms. Such high dose chronic consumption of kratom appears to be mostly limited to Southeast Asia and relatively uncommon in the US (e.g., Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013).

The intertwining of factors that include consumption for benefit and life-style enhancement along with varying degrees of dependence, whether for caffeinated beverage consumption or kratom consumption, demonstrates the importance of distinguishing between volitional lifestyle and life enhancing consumption, and “dependence” or “addiction.” As is the case with consumption of caffeinated beverages, kratom consumption is not commonly associated with adverse health effects (other than minor gastrointestinal discomfort that serves to limit pleasure and consumption), and thus consumption appears rarely to be occurring “in the face of harm or personal or recurrent social problems,” which is a common defining feature of substance use disorders as defined by the American Psychiatric Association (2013) or by other

definitions of drug dependence or addiction (American Psychiatric Association 1994; World Health Organization, 1992; American Society for Addiction Medicine, 2016; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2016).

These factors taken together for caffeine contribute to the reason that the DSM-5, as in earlier editions, does not formally recognize caffeine substance use disorder even though it includes criteria for diagnosis of caffeine intoxication and withdrawal disorders (APA, 2013). Similarly, whereas the opinion of the authors of this analysis is that kratom, like caffeine, can cause dependence if taken in very large quantities (Henningfield, 2015; Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Lanier et al., 2016; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016) and “it also carries some abuse liability” (Ward et al., 2011, p. 1001), at least in the US, consumption is generally considered volitional and for the general and/or specific desired effects associated with consumption, as is the case with caffeinated products (Henningfield, 2015).

Serious substance abusers seem to agree that kratom is not a preferred drug of abuse. Evaluations posted on websites and discussion groups where persons who abuse drugs share information report mild and relatively slowly onsetting effects. Their experiences often include both desired and undesired effects that fall far short of what can be readily produced by prototypic drugs of abuse as discussed in Factor 5 of this report. Consistent with this is the virtual absence of evidence that kratom consumption is a significant or serious public health problem or has emerged as a form of substance abuse on any major national US drug monitoring surveillance system, as summarized in Factors 4 and 6 of this report. The lack of public health problems or abuse is despite the fact that there has been widespread consumption of kratom by consumers for more than two decades in the US, and likely consumption among some populations for decades longer.

After an analysis of available data and information, it is clear that kratom, like caffeine, nicotine, dextromethorphan, many antihistamines, antidepressants, and other substances² sold as consumer products and/or as medicines, not to mention various solvents, inhalants, and glues, share limited evidence of characteristics that could be used to support placement in the CSA if that was a predetermined objective. However, such a conclusion would require an extremely selective reading of the evidence that discounts the many mitigating factors in their use patterns. Moreover, whether such substances, including kratom, *should* be so controlled is a more complicated issue and

² Including alcohol and tobacco, but tobacco products and alcoholic beverages are exempted from CSA scheduling by the 1970 CSA itself. 21 USC 802(6) (“The term ‘controlled substance’ means a drug or other substance, or immediate precursor, included in schedule I, II, III, IV, or V of part B of this subchapter. The term does not include distilled spirits, wine, malt beverages, or tobacco, as those terms are defined or used in subtitle E of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.”).

one that must consider the overall public health assessment that is part of the CSA eight factor analysis. There is ample precedent from many other substances and products that share characteristics with certain controlled substances, but have not been placed under the CSA and which are regulated through other statutory and regulatory authorities to promote safe and appropriate consumption and to minimize unintended and harmful effects. These include dextromethorphan, nicotine smoking cessation aids, and caffeine (e.g., Consumer Healthcare Products Association, 2010; Food and Drug Administration, 1995, 1996, 2010b; Henningfield, 2015; Lanier, Fant, Cone, and Henningfield, 2016; Meredith, Juliano, Hughes, and Griffiths, 2013; National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2016a).

This analysis also recognizes that the present situation is different from a typical scheduling analysis for a product developed as a drug for FDA approval. Rather, this analysis must address the evidence concerning various kratom preparations and products that have been used for centuries in Southeast Asia and decades in the US. In the US, there are an estimated several million users purchasing products from more than 10,000 retail outlets with an estimated annual market of 207 million dollars (Botanical Education Alliance, 2016). Consumers include immigrants and their families from Southeast Asia where consumption is widespread as a natural remedy and in traditional food preparation. Anecdotal evidence suggests that such consumption has existed in the US for several decades. The more general consumption across the US has largely developed in the past two decades.

The purpose of this document is to review the data related to the abuse potential and toxicity of *Mitragyna speciosa* (also known as kratom) and its primary alkaloids, mitragynine (MG) and 7-hydroxy-mitragynine (7-OH-MG), and the relevance of those data to the doses found in kratom.

Following is a summary of the main conclusions of this analysis and recommendation:

- 1) Placement of kratom in the CSA is not warranted from a public health perspective and is more likely to cause public health problems that do not presently exist.
- 2) Kratom consumption has not emerged as a public health or medical problem for adults or children despite more than two decades of rapidly increasing consumption by millions of Americans served by approximately 10,000 vendors. Specifically, among the 3-4 publicly documented deaths that have ever been suspected to possibly have involved the consumption of kratom, none have been shown to merit designation as a kratom overdose death and all have involved either other substances or physical or mental health conditions that may have been the primary causes of, or significant contributors to, the death. Remarkably, no deaths, serious adverse effects, or emergency department

exposures have been reported in children. It is important to understand that this conclusion does not mean that such events have never or will never occur, but the signal for a public health problem associated with kratom marketing and consumption is very weak.

- 3) Appropriate regulation of kratom products, whether natural or processed leaves, or manufactured derivatives marketed as dietary supplements, is as important for kratom as it is for products such as coffee, tea, and related extracts that are currently regulated under existing Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA) authority.
- 4) Kratom consumption is widespread across the US and spans more than two decades, but kratom consumption has not emerged as a substance abuse problem in the US as measured by any of the US national substance abuse monitoring surveillance systems or by our nation's networks of substance abuse treatment programs that are constantly adapting to the challenges posed by those seeking treatment for emerging forms of abuse and dependence.
- 5) Current kratom users report being likely to be adversely affected and possibly motivated to seek illicit sources if lawfully marketed kratom were no longer available. This would seem likely to include many Southeast Asian immigrants who are believed to have brought kratom consumption customs with them to the US; however, there has been very little documentation and characterization of kratom use patterns in the US by such populations.
- 6) Kratom consumption appears to be primarily motivated by its perceived effects that enhance well-being, occupational performance, and social interactions, as well as serving as a natural "home remedy" that is preferred by millions of Americans to conventional medicines.
- 7) The foregoing is consistent with the pharmacology of kratom and more specifically its alkaloids (MG and 7-OH-MG), which produce mixed pharmacological effects that are generally mild and caffeine stimulant-like at lower dosages. Consumption does not typically interfere with work or social activities and commitments, and in fact kratom is widely reported in the US, as in Southeast Asia, to contribute to work productivity, quality of life, and social relationships.
- 8) The primary effects of kratom are likely predominantly produced by MG with possible contribution of 7-OH-MG. These two alkaloids have been characterized as including partial mu opioid receptor activity including anti-nociception (pain relief), mild pleasurable effects, and constipation at high doses but an apparent lower risk of constipation at typical levels of consumption as compared to opioids. Respiratory depressant effects appear substantially lower than those produced by opioids – a finding that would be consistent with the absence of verified

kratom caused overdose deaths. Future research should study the respiratory effects of kratom in combination with known respiratory depressants because the absence, or at least very low apparent risk, of kratom overdose poisoning suggests that the effects of such depressants are not substantially enhanced by kratom.

- 9) Injection of very high doses of MG can produce discriminative stimulant and opioid-type reinforcement in rodents; however, these effects only occur at doses that appear far higher than those that could be ingested in a single sitting by humans, and the relevance of such findings to human oral kratom consumption is not clear. In fact, the doses of MG required to produce discriminative stimulant effects and reinforcement in rodents are much higher than the doses that could be easily ingested from kratom. This is in contrast to many other consumer products, including dextromethorphan and nutmeg, in which it is relatively easy to consume enough doses to achieve a reinforcing and/or intoxicating effect.
- 10) In contrast to the effects of increasing the dose of substances of high abuse potential (e.g., opioids, stimulants, and sedatives), increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, and little additional mood enhancement. More research is needed to better characterize the profile and understand the mechanisms of action of kratom.
- 11) Animal studies have demonstrated some signs consistent with physical dependence and withdrawal at what appear to be extraordinarily high dosages of MG. Specifically, laboratory rats were given 30 mg/kg/day i.p., equating to an oral dose of about 990 mg/kg (Yusoff et al., 2016). Humans would need to consume over 800 oral doses of kratom in a single sitting to achieve the same dose of MG. In fact, no evidence has demonstrated production of physical dependence and withdrawal at levels consistent with human use. However, the modest desirability of the effects would seem to make such a heroic effort extremely unlikely because the pleasure derived from consumption does not appear similar in magnitude to that produced by far less costly and readily available doses of typical substances of abuse including marijuana, alcohol, stimulants, sedatives, and opioids. More research is needed to understand the relevance of such findings to human consumption and better characterize kratom among other substances.
- 12) MG and kratom have very low toxicity, and thus a favorable safety profile. There have been few reports of serious adverse events or deaths associated with kratom and for most, the contribution of kratom is not clear. For example, in Sweden in about 2008-2009, a blend of herbals including kratom along with the opioid analgesic O-desmethyltramadol, and possibly co-administration of other drug substances was associated with nine deaths. Tramadol (including O-desmethyltramadol), in contrast to kratom, has been documented to carry a risk

of severe respiratory depression and overdose death. To date, in the US, there have been no confirmed reports of death that can be considered “causatively” due to kratom overdose. How many, if any deaths, are “probably” classified as kratom poisoning deaths is not clear. This is consistent with the far larger and longer Southeast Asian experience of very few serious adverse events. In both the US and Southeast Asia, the low toxicity of kratom is in striking contrast to the experience with opioids.

- 13) With respect to safety, the absence of reports of adverse effects associated with pediatric exposure to kratom is striking given that children under six years of age are considered highly vulnerable and account for many poison control center calls and emergency department visits from exposure to a broad range of household products, over the counter drugs, and prescription drugs including opioids. The total absence of reports of adverse effects in children likely seems due to a combination of the low toxicity of kratom, the distastefulness of the products, and the relatively low concentrations of alkaloids in personal and commercial preparations.
- 14) Taking together basic research findings, available epidemiology, clinical observations, and anecdotal self-reports, very high levels of chronic intake of kratom can cause signs consistent with physiological dependence and withdrawal and some degree of psychological dependence, although any signs consistent with dependence have not been accompanied by use through harm or social detriment. However, in many respects, the factors that appear important in sustaining kratom consumption appear more similar to those that sustain dietary caffeine consumption, namely to better manage fatigue and daily life demands and provide mild effects considered enhancing to quality of life. Further research should help to better characterize kratom as it compares to other substances that affect behavioral and physiological function and the contribution of such effects to consumption and safety.
- 15) There has been little study of the rates, risk, or nature of what might be categorized as a substance use disorder involving kratom in the United States. Anecdotal data, including the testimonials appended to this report, suggest that most use is for life-style enhancement and as a natural remedy for various ailments. Thus, rather than consumption to sustain addiction or to get high, and with little apparent harm to self or others, consumption appears largely to the benefit of individuals. This suggests a similarity with caffeine containing products that certainly can produce dependence and withdrawal but which have not been recognized for a disorder category of dependence or substance use disorder category by the American Psychiatric Association (APA, 2013) because there has not been sufficient documentation of clinical impairment or use despite harmful effects.

- 16) In addition, the partial mu agonist activity of two alkaloids, MG and 7-OH-MG, likely confers some degree of relief of at least minor pain, diarrhea, and coughing, and it is plausible, predicting from what is known of the pharmacology, that high dosages could provide some relief of symptoms of opioid withdrawal; however there has been little systematic study of such potential benefits.
- 17) There appear to be remarkably low risk of serious adverse effects from kratom consumption as compared to opioids and other common drugs of abuse. Further, there is little evidence that kratom products are used by routes other than oral beverage or food consumption. In contrast, opioids and many other drugs of abuse are frequently used by high impact routes such as nasal insufflation, smoking, and injecting. Graduation from oral consumption to such other routes is common for opioids and other substances of abuse but not for kratom.
- 18) Although the primary alkaloids of kratom, MG and 7-OH-MG, may demonstrate some characteristics considered for controlled substance scheduling, as do many other products including caffeine, nicotine, some antihistamines, and alcohol, despite decades of wide-spread consumption, there does not appear to be a public health risk that would warrant their scheduling.
- 19) Consumption of kratom products appears to provide positive benefits such as relief of pain and fatigue without the adverse consequences produced by other products that are used for similar purposes as reported in the appended testimonials and over a century or more of documented consumption in Southeast Asia. For example, liver disease caused deaths associated with the use of acetaminophen is a serious problem in the US, and there are problems of serious GI side effects and cardiovascular problems associated with the use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). At the far extreme, there is the inherent risk of overdose and serious addiction associated with the use of opioids. For those who manage various ailments with kratom instead of such products, the benefit to risk ratio appears favorable.
- 20) Banning or restricting access to kratom products would not only deny current kratom consumers of the benefits they obtain from kratom, but would likely serve to create a substantial illicit market to meet those demands. This illicit market would not be subject to regulation such as by the FDCA and would be more likely to harm public health than to maintain appropriate access through the lawfully regulated marketplace. Schedule I placement would not only restrict access to consumers, it would also severely impede the willingness and ability of researchers to conduct the research that is vital to more thoroughly characterizing the effects, mechanisms of action, and safety of kratom. Keeping appropriately regulated kratom products available in the US appears to be in the interests of public health.

2 Analysis of Kratom under the CSA 8 Factors

The present 8-factor analysis has been developed to determine the appropriateness of CSA scheduling of kratom and/or its alkaloids and derivative products, and if so, the most appropriate schedule for kratom.

Based on all lines of evidence considered in the 8-factor analysis, kratom's potential for abuse, tolerance, and dependence is lower than that of many schedule IV and V drugs and is well within the range of many nonscheduled drugs and substances (e.g., caffeine, nasal nicotine spray, fluoxetine, bupropion, dextromethorphan). Although kratom and its primary alkaloids MG and 7-OH-MG share certain characteristics with controlled substances, as do many nonscheduled substances, there does not appear to be a public health risk that would warrant control of kratom products or their alkaloids under the CSA. Rather, regulation under the FDCA by the FDA would seem the most effective mechanism to ensure continued access to kratom products that are marketed with appropriate oversight.

3 Review of the Eight Factors of the Controlled Substances Act

3.1 Factor 1: Its actual or relative potential for abuse

Definitions of addiction, abuse potential, and other terms, which are provided at the beginning of this report, are important to understand the following analysis. There is no question that consumption of kratom can produce effects that, at least at some doses, people can feel and which are important in their decision to consume kratom. Analysis of Factor 1 will provide part of the basis for characterizing its effect profile with respect to the nature and strength of the effects and the relevance of this for a scheduling recommendation.

Perhaps the most prevailing observations in clinical, scientific, and ethnographic reports from 1930 to 2016 about the reasons for kratom consumption are the functional benefits of kratom consumption to enhance and sustain, if not enable occupational work demands, and as a social interaction enhancer when used together with family and friends. Hassan et al. (2013) attribute most kratom consumption as at least initially motivated by what they, and others, term "instrumental" or "instrumentalized" consumption as a means of achieving work goals and not withdrawing from such obligations.

There is also agreement that at least in Southeast Asia, abuse, dependence, and/or addiction may develop with heavy daily consumption, at least among hard laborers, as seems historically more prevalent there than in the United States, but with the recurrent explanation that this seems heavily driven by work and environmental demands and that, in contrast to daily opioid use (when such comparisons are made), such consumption is more likely associated with beneficial occupational and social outcomes.

More specifically, the scientific and ethnographic literature often describes kratom consumption as primarily motivated by the "useful," "beneficial," "labor sustaining," "therapeutic," "mood" and "well-being" enhancing, and "instrumental" benefits, as well as

dependence (Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016). There are parallels in reported motivation for consumption of coffee and tea and other caffeinated beverages which are often reported as used for sustaining performance, alerting effects and enhancing mood (Addicott, 2014; Borota et al., 2014; Cappelletti et al., 2015; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013). As is the case with caffeinated beverages, at least high dose chronic kratom consumption, as appears more common in Southeast Asia than the US, can lead to signs consistent with dependence with difficulty abstaining, as well as apparent withdrawal symptoms (e.g., Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016; Goldstein et al., 2010; Meredith et al., 2013). The intertwining of these factors, for caffeinated product consumption as for kratom product consumption, requires close attention to detail in distinguishing “dependence” without harm or negative social effects from “addiction.” In both, only the former has been observed. Another parallel with caffeinated beverages is the fact that common levels of kratom consumption are not commonly associated with adverse health effects. Thus, consumption is not typically “in the face of harm or personal or recurrent social problems” as is a common defining feature of dependence disorders (i.e., “addictive” or “substance use” disorders) as discussed further in this review.

These factors taken together contribute to the reason that the APA DSM-5, as in earlier editions, does not formally recognize caffeine substance use disorder even though it includes criteria for diagnosis of caffeine intoxication and withdrawal disorders (APA, 2013). Similarly, whereas the opinion of the authors of this analysis is that kratom can cause signs consistent with dependence without harm or social problems (Henningfield, 2015; Aziz, 2014; Hassan et al., 2013; Lanier et al., 2016; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016) and “it also carries some abuse liability” at very high doses (Ward et al., 2011, p. 1001), at least in the US, consumption is generally considered volitional and for the general and/or specific desired effects associated with consumption as is the case with caffeinated products (Henningfield, 2015). Both products’ volitional use is not consistent with abuse of the product or a dependence disorder.

The apparent worst case scenario conditions for very heavy consumption appears to have been in Southeast Asia among laborers who were required to work at heavy labor tasks for long hours and often in extremely high heat conditions. Kratom leaves were plentiful and heavily relied upon to enable such work. This was described in 1930, in *The Chemist and the Druggist*, in a short article titled, “Kratom Eaters” that described the effects of chewing 10-30 kratom leaves three times per day by laborers to prolong their ability to be capable of “arduous work” including improved tolerance to endure fatigue and “torrid heat” (Available at https://archive.org/stream/b19974760M2738/b19974760M2738_djvu.txt, accessed November 28, 2016). Note that this quantity of kratom appears extremely high compared to typical kratom consumption, however, the article included no estimate of alkaloid content or nature of the leaves that would permit quantitative comparison to today’s products and practices. Nonetheless, these kratom consumers were considered to be “addicted” by the author, but that definition is not consistent with the contemporary use of the term because, as noted by the author, “the habit is stated not to be harmful since the kratom eater does not change his character.”

Aziz (2014) also credited kratom consumption primarily by workers to increased endurance and stamina, as well as for social reasons. Singh et al. (2014), in a review of dependence and potential withdrawal, also described very heavy consumption among workers but also by many people as a social enhancer with family and friends, with about 79% of such consumers using daily. They stated that “Most users share the belief that it is better to consum[e] Kratom in order to improve work performance than using illicit stimulant-drugs which could also be more expensive.” It was observed that in contrast to the view of opioid users, kratom users were seen as “diligent” and “hardworking” despite the view that they were dependent and many experienced mild symptoms consistent with withdrawal upon termination of use. Similarly, Suwanlert (1975) described “regular kratom users” as having an increased tolerance for work and “increased calm.”

Taken together these observations suggest that consumption is more analogous to the consumption of caffeinated products that makes daily caffeinated beverage consumption so common in the US and globally. These observations are not the pattern of the adverse effects of prototypic addictive drug use on life, health, and society.

3.1.1 Animal Data on Drug Discrimination and Reinforcement

3.1.1.1 Discrimination

Drug discrimination procedures have often been used to help characterize the central nervous system (CNS) effects and predict the abuse potential of new drugs (Ator and Griffiths, 2003), and there is a strong positive relationship between discriminative stimulus effects of drugs in non-humans and the subjective effects of the same drugs in humans (Lelas et al., 2000; McMahon et al., 2002). However, generalization with an active substance known to cause dependence in itself is not necessarily indicative of dependence potential (Ator and Griffiths, 2003). Rather, the results should indicate whether or not kratom and/or its constituent compounds are likely to have subjective effects that are qualitatively similar to that of prototypic drugs of abuse.

There have been no studies of the discriminative stimulus effects of kratom as an herbal product. However, as discussed below, there has been a study of the discriminative stimulus effects of injected MG which showed that doses that would appear extremely large (e.g., an equivalent of over 500 2-ounce bottles of one widely marketed product (VivaZen[®]) if taken orally (Henningfield, 2015)) can provide morphine-like effects in rats. The relevance of the findings for human consumption and regulation are extremely limited because, as discussed below, there are virtually no reports of extraction or injection of its alkaloids or consumption by any other route at this level. The research is solely helpful in better understanding the mechanism of kratom’s constituents.

Harun et al. (2015) investigated the discriminative stimulus effects of MG in rats. The pharmacological mechanism of MG action and its derivative, 7-OH-MG, with a specific focus on opioid receptor involvement was examined in rats trained to discriminate morphine from vehicle. Rats acquired the MG discrimination (15.0 mg/kg, i.p.);

however, approximately 100 trials of training (50 MG and 50 vehicle sessions) were required before the rats could discriminate MG from vehicle. The group of rats trained to discriminate morphine (5.0 mg/kg, i.p.) from vehicle required fewer training trials, i.e. approximately 60 training sessions in total (30 morphine and 30 vehicle). In stimulus generalization tests with a range of MG doses, 3.0 mg/kg, i.p. produced partial generalization to the 15.0 mg/kg, i.p. dose (around 60% MG-appropriate responding), and full generalization to the training dose was found at the 10.0 mg/kg, i.p. dose. MG substituted fully to the morphine discriminative stimulus in a dose-dependent manner, suggesting pharmacological similarities between the two drugs. However, generalization to morphine occurred at the MG dose of 15.0 mg/kg, i.p., and was not seen at the 1 or 3 mg/kg, i.p. dose. This 15 mg/kg i.p. dose would thus equate to an oral dose of about 495 mg/kg³ in rats to produce an effect that resembles 5 mg of injected morphine. Converting this to a human equivalent dose based on body surface area, this would equate to 79.84 mg/kg in humans, or almost 5.6 grams of MG taken orally by a 70 kg human. The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). Based on this, 1 gram of kratom leaves would contain around 15 mg of alkaloids (based on the 1.5% figure), about 9 mg of which would be MG. This would suggest that a human would need to consume 630 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a subjective effect that would fully substitute for morphine – the equivalent of over 500 2-ounce bottles commonly sold in stores. Although kratom leaves also contain smaller quantities of other alkaloids including 7-OH-MG, which is more potent at the mu opioid receptor, impractically large quantities of kratom would have to be consumed, even assuming some subjective effects of these other alkaloids.

As previously noted, generalization with an active substance known to cause dependence in itself is not necessarily indicative of dependence potential (Ator and Griffiths, 2003). The finding that MG substituted to the morphine discriminative stimulus when injected at very high dosages in rats supports the conclusion that the effects of kratom are mediated at least in part by opioid receptors; however, the relevance of these findings to human effects and consumption are limited.

3.1.1.2 Reinforcement

Centrally-acting drugs that produce highly pleasurable (rewarding) or psychologically reinforcing subjective effects in animals and man can lead to craving or addiction and also to diversion and nonmedical abuse, if the effect is strong enough. Many drugs that

³ Based on the calculated absolute oral bioavailability value of 3.03% (Parthasarathy et al., 2010)

are powerful reinforcers in man are also reliably self-administered by various animal species (e.g., rats, dogs, monkeys or baboons; Ator and Griffiths, 2003).

There have been no studies of the reinforcing effects of kratom as an herbal product. However, as discussed below, there has been a study of the reinforcing value of a kratom extract, and studies have examined the reinforcing value of MG when given by injection to animals. The reinforcing value of the extract was less than that of MG. In studies of MG, doses of 5 mg/kg to 10 mg/kg, i.p. were shown to increase conditioned place preference (CPP) relative to placebo. As is the case with the discrimination study, the relevance of this to human consumption is not clear, having involved injections of extremely high doses, far beyond what could reasonably be consumed by a human from current products. Nonetheless, such research is important in helping to understand the mechanisms of action of kratom.

Sufka et al. (2014) also used the CPP model to characterize the psychoactive properties of *Mitragyna speciosa* MeOH extract (50, 100, 300 mg/kg, i.p.), *Mitragyna speciosa* alkaloid-enriched fraction (12.5, 25, 75 mg/kg, i.p.), and MG (5, 10, 30 mg/kg, i.p.) in rats. Rats were given eight counter-balanced drug versus vehicle conditioning trials followed by a preference test conducted under drug-free states. S(+)-amphetamine (1 mg/kg) served as the positive control and haloperidol (0.8, 1.0 mg/kg) served as the negative control in both studies. Rats showed place preference to MG that was similar to that of S(+)-amphetamine. This CPP effect was much less pronounced with the *Mitragyna speciosa* extract and its fraction. The preference scores for the 5 and 30 mg/kg MG groups, but not the 10 mg/kg group, were significantly higher than those for the vehicle.

Yusoff et al. (2016) examined the potential rewarding properties of injected MG using the CPP model. Rats that were conditioned with morphine (10 mg/kg, i.p.) and methamphetamine (1 mg/kg, i.p.) established a significant CPP for the drug-paired chamber. MG induced a significant CPP at doses of 10 mg/kg, i.p. and 30 mg/kg, i.p., but MG doses of 1 mg, i.p. and 5 mg, i.p. did not produce a significant effect.

Taken together, these studies suggest that an injected dose of 5 mg/kg was required to produce conditioned place preference in rats, which would equate to an oral dose of 165 mg/kg. Converting this to a human equivalent dose based on body surface area, this would equate to 26.6 mg/kg in humans, or over 1.8 grams of MG taken orally by a 70 kg human. The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). Based on this, 1 gram of kratom leaves would contain around 15 mg of alkaloids (based on the 1.5% figure), about 9 mg of which would be MG. This would suggest that a human would need to consume around 200 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a reinforcing effect – over 150 2-ounce doses. Although kratom leaves also contain smaller quantities of other alkaloids including 7-OH-MG, which is more potent at the mu opioid receptor, impractically large quantities of kratom would have to be consumed even assuming some subjective effects of these other alkaloids.

3.1.1.3 Relevance of Doses to Humans, and Equivalencies with Other Unscheduled Drugs

In assessing the abuse potential of a particular product, it is important to consider the dose and route of administration. Reports of kratom consumption show that kratom is virtually exclusively consumed via the oral route, and it is likely that it would be very difficult to extract MG from the leaf or powder without extensive experience in chemistry and access to laboratory equipment. In contrast, the rodent research cited in the section above administered the drug via the i.p. route. Oral absorption of MG is slow, prolonged, and was incomplete, with a calculated absolute oral bioavailability value of 3.03% (Parthasarathy et al., 2010). The table below compares the number of units that would be required to achieve discrimination and reinforcement from several over-the-counter products that are currently not controlled.

Table 1. Number of units that would be required to achieve discrimination and reinforcement from several over-the-counter products.

Drug	Discriminable Dose	Reinforcing Dose	Dose in Common Products
Mitragynine	10 mg/kg, i.p. (Harun et al., 2015)	5 mg/kg, i.p. (Sufka et al., 2014)	Around 200 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a reinforcing effect – over 150 2-ounce doses
Caffeine	(N=7)- Three subjects discriminated 56 mg, three discriminated 18 mg and one discriminated 10 mg (Griffiths et al., 1990)	At the two lowest doses (100 and 200 mg) 5 of the 12 subjects demonstrated significant caffeine positive reinforcement at one or both doses (Griffiths & Woodson, 1988)	Excedrin Extra Strength Caplets – 65 mg/caplet 10 Hour Energy Shot- 422 mg 5 Hour Energy- 200 mg Brewed coffee- 163 mg/8 oz Monster energy drink- 160 mg/16 oz Coca Cola- 34 mg/12 oz (http://www.caffeineinformer.com/the-caffeine-database)
Dextromethorphan	No human studies 30 mg/kg, i.p. in rats (Gavend et	Doses of 400 and 800 mg/70 kg increased drug liking scores. 92%	Robitussin Maximum Strength 10 mg//5 ml – 480 mg/8 oz bottle Mucinex DM Max Strength – 60 mg/tablet. 840 mg/14 count package

Drug	Discriminable Dose	Reinforcing Dose	Dose in Common Products
	al., 1995)	of subjects reported 400 mg/70 kg as feeling like they had received a “classic hallucinogen” (Reissig et al., 2012)	
Diphenhydramine	In rats, partial generalization to cocaine (78%) at 17.8 mg/kg (Gauvin, 1995)	400 mg increased end of day scores on liking and take drug again (Preston et al., 1992)	Sleep aid liquidcaps – 50 mg/cap, package of 32 (1600 mg total) Equate nighttime sleep aid – 25 mg-100 capsules per box (2500 mg)
Non-Alcoholic Beer	55% of subjects could be trained to discriminate 0.2 g/kg alcohol from placebo (Jackson et al., 2001)	Self-administration of ethanol at doses of 5-7 grams (Bigelow et al., 1977)	In the United States, one "standard" drink contains roughly 14 grams of pure alcohol, which is found in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 ounces of regular beer, which is usually about 5% alcohol • 5 ounces of wine, which is typically about 12% alcohol • 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits, which is about 40% alcohol O'Douls- 0.4%- 1.12g
Nicotine	<1 mg by smoked, oral “chew”, or intravenous in humans	<1 mg by smoked, oral “chew”, or intravenous in humans (Henningfield et al., 2005; US DHHS, 2010)	All common tobacco products contain and deliver substantially higher doses but are typically used only as much as necessary to produce the desired effects. Former Surgeon General Koop, the first SG to conclude that nicotine met all criteria as an addictive drug, testified on behalf of allowing then prescription nicotine gum and patches to be

Drug	Discriminable Dose	Reinforcing Dose	Dose in Common Products
			approved for over the counter sales to make it more readily available for consumers to use as they desired to quit smoking.

It should also be noted that there are a variety of other herbal and consumer products that likely have some reinforcing effects, but are not controlled substances. For example, nutmeg contains myristicin, a natural compound that can produce hallucinogenic effects if taken in doses of around five teaspoons. When taking large amounts of nutmeg, it may take hours for auditory hallucinations to occur. This could result in increased overdose risk if the user thinks they haven't taken enough.

There are a variety of herbs and products with sedative effects, including the following:

- Chamomile
- Passionflower
- Ashwagandha
- Schisandra
- California Poppy
- Hops
- Kava
- Lavender
- Lemon Balm
- St. John's Wort
- Red Clover
- Catnip
- Valerian
- Motherwort
- Skullcap
- Poppy seeds
- Hemp seeds/oil

Herbs that are commonly used and sometimes abused for energy bursts include guarana and kola nut, both of which contain caffeine.

Poppy seeds are harvested from the opium poppy and contain a mixture of opium alkaloids (e.g., morphine, codeine, thebaine). Poppy seeds are used as foodstuffs in many parts of the world. Depending upon the seed source, harvesting practices, and washing procedures, the content of opium alkaloids in poppy seed is widely variable. A serving of poppy seeds (e.g., poppy seed bagel) may contain a few micrograms to a few milligrams of opium alkaloids. Some foodstuffs contain larger amounts of poppy seeds (strudel prepared with poppy seeds). Due to the variable alkaloid content in poppy seeds, it is not possible to estimate what a standard serving of poppy seeds contains in terms of morphine content, but according to reports, the content has been high enough to trigger workplace drug testing for some workers who consumed foods with poppy seeds (Thevis et al., 2003; Lachenmeier et al., 2010; Moeller et al., 2004; U.S. Anti Doping Agency, 2014).

CONFIDENTIAL

Hemp seeds and oil are harvested from the cannabis plant and may contain tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive ingredient in cannabis material. Normally, the THC in these products are quite low, but some individuals have tested positive for THC metabolites following ingestion of these products, most notably, with hemp oil products. DEA regulation was recently instituted that exempted hemp oil containing any amount of THC from the CSA if the hemp oil was not used or intended for human consumption. 21 CFR 1308.35.

3.1.2 Summary of Factor 1

The findings above suggest that the main alkaloid in kratom, MG, provides some evidence of abuse potential when injected at extremely high dosages in animals. Specifically, the data suggest that MG shares some discriminative stimulus effects with morphine in rats when injected at very high doses, and that the substance produces reinforcing effects. However, as noted elsewhere in this report, it would be extremely difficult to isolate the MG from kratom leaves to make an injectable preparation of MG. Further, the amount of MG in kratom leaves is only about 9 mg per gram, and the oral bioavailability of MG is quite low (3.03%). This would suggest that huge quantities of kratom would need to be consumed to obtain the effects seen after taking a pure mu opioid such as morphine. Thus, although important as basic research, the relevance to human oral consumption is limited. Furthermore, in contrast to the effects of increasing the dose of substances of high abuse potential (e.g., prototypic opioids, stimulants, and sedatives), increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, and little additional mood enhancement.⁴

In addition, as discussed in this section and elsewhere in this report, it appears that the vast majority of kratom consumption is for perceived benefits and social/occupational enhancement, and not for the euphoric effects of the product.

⁴ These observations are limited by the absence of classic human abuse potential studies, such as the ones in which the authors of this report are expert (e.g., FDA, 2010; Schuster and Henningfield, 2003), but are consistent with clinical, ethnographic, and internet reports, as well as the pharmacology as known to date and discussed further on this report (Raffa, 2015; Henningfield, 2015; Ward et al., 2011; Warner et al., 2016).

3.2 Factor 2: Scientific evidence of its pharmacological effect, if known

The pharmacology of kratom was reviewed recently by Warner et al. (2016) and some of this discussion was drawn from that review as well as Henningfield (2015). Over 40 different constituents have been isolated from kratom (EMCDDA, 2015; Gogineni et al., 2014), and kratom leaves have been found to contain over 25 alkaloids (Tanguay, 2011; Hassan et al., 2013). The alkaloids MG and 7-OH-MG are believed to be the primary active alkaloids in the plant (Tanguay, 2011; Warner, 2016). The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract with 7-OH-MG accounting for only up to 2% (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). In a recent study by Kruegel et al. (2016), the authors found only trace quantities of 7-OH-MG (by mass spectrometry) in their extractions of the raw plant material, and concluded that it is doubtful that 7-OH-MG is a universal constituent of all *Mitragyna speciosa* preparations and is unlikely to generally account for the psychoactive properties of this plant.

Mitragynine is an indole-containing alkaloid, structurally similar to yohimbine, a component of the common dietary supplement yohimbe (Hassan et al., 2013; Prozialeck et al., 2012; Rosenbaum et al., 2012). Both mitragynine and 7-OH exhibit nanomolar binding affinities for the μ -opioid receptors and possess functional activity in tissue assays (Takayama et al., 2002; Matsumoto et al., 2004). In addition, the antinociceptive effects of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG in several rodent models are also inhibited by naloxone (Takayama et al., 2002; Matsumoto et al., 2004; Matsumoto et al., 1996). However, mitragynine was found to produce markedly less respiratory depression than codeine (Macko et al., 1972).

In animal models, mitragynine exhibits activity on supraspinal μ - and δ -opioid receptors causing its characteristic analgesic effects (Rosenbaum et al., 2012; Hassan et al., 2013; EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). With consideration to the interactions at the cellular level, studies suggest that neurotransmitter release from the nerve endings at the vas deferens is inhibited (Prozialeck, 2012). This inhibition is suggested to occur through the obstruction of neuronal calcium (Ca^{2+}) channels (Hassan et al., 2013; Philipp, 2010). Blocked stimulation of serotonergic 5-HT_{2A} receptors and stimulation of postsynaptic alpha-2 adrenergic receptors are thought to contribute to stimulant activity (Rosenbaum et al., 2012; EMCDDA, 2015).

In animal models, additional psychoactivity is said to exist as a consequence of binding affinities exceeding that of morphine at the δ - and κ -opioid central receptors (Prozialeck, 2012). Moreover, 7-OH-MG provides high opioid receptor affinity with agonist properties (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). While polarity is increased due to the additional hydroxyl group on 7-OH-MG as compared to mitragynine, increased activity of 7-OH-MG is otherwise not well understood (Prozialeck, 2012).

Unlike the preclinical models, Kruegel et al. (2016) showed that at the human opioid receptors (human μ -, δ -, and κ -opioid receptors), mitragynine acted as a partial agonist at human μ -opioid receptors ($\text{EC}_{50} = 339 \pm 178 \text{ nM}$; maximal efficacy (E_{max}) = 34%). In

contrast, at human κ -opioid receptors, mitragynine was a competitive antagonist ($IC_{50} = 8.5 \pm 7.6 \mu M$; $pA_2 = 1.4 \pm 0.40 \mu M$), fully inhibiting the activity of the reference agonist U-50,488. Similarly, mitragynine acted as an antagonist at human δ -opioid receptors, but with very low potency. The other major natural alkaloids paynantheine, speciogynine, and speciociliatine, showed no measurable agonist activity at any of the human opioid receptors at concentrations up to $100 \mu M$, and only weak antagonist effects were observed. This partial agonist activity is consistent with the observation that mitragynine was found to produce markedly less respiratory depression than codeine (Macko et al., 1972), as well as the lack of respiratory depression-related deaths discussed elsewhere in this report.

7-OH-MG was also characterized and found to be a potent, partial agonist at human μ -opioid receptors ($EC_{50} = 34.5 \pm 4.5 \text{ nM}$; $E_{max} = 47\%$). Further, it acted as a competitive antagonist at both human κ -opioid receptors ($IC_{50} = 7.9 \pm 3.7 \mu M$; $pA_2 = 490 \pm 131 \text{ nM}$) and human δ -opioid receptors ($IC_{50} > 10 \mu M$). The partial agonist activity of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG at the human receptors was further confirmed in antagonist experiments, as both compounds were able to partially inhibit the response elicited by the full agonist [D -Ala₂, N-Me-Phe₄, Gly-ol₅]-enkephalin (DAMGO). As with MG, the partial agonist activity of 7-OH-MG is consistent with the lack of respiratory depression-related deaths discussed elsewhere in this report.

Although MG (Warner et al., 2016; Hassan et al., 2013) and sometimes 7-OH-MG (Matsumoto et al., 2005) have been reported as 13 times more potent than morphine, many of the references to support this figure appear to not actually report this finding. In fact, a wide range of findings have been reported for MG and 7-OH-MG related to relative potency (the amount needed to produce an effect) and strength (the maximal effect, e.g. guinea pig ileum muscle twitch, or analgesic effect on mice placed on an uncomfortably but not burning hot plate). These are often reported in article abstracts and in turn by the media as “morphine” or “opioid” like effects with little context for what was actually studied, what was found, and its relevance or lack thereof to human use and effects.

For example, Warner et al. (2016) cites Rosenbaum et al. (2012) to support the statement that MG has “approximately 13 times the potency of morphine in regards to its opioid-like effects”. In turn, Rosenbaum et al. (2012) cite Vicknasingam (2010) and Matsumoto et al. (2005). Vicknasingam (2010) states “Two alkaloids in kratom—mitragynine and alkaloid 7-hydroxymitragynine—act as agonists to supraspinal μ - and δ -opioid receptors and produce effects similar to morphine. In fact, the latter [i.e., 7-OH-MG] exhibited about 13 times higher potency than morphine....” Matsumoto’s only discussion of the 13-times figure says “7-hydroxymitragynine inhibited electrically induced contraction through the opioid receptors, and its effect was about 13-fold more potent than morphine.” Thus it appears that 7-OH-MG (not MG) may exhibit effects 13 times greater than morphine on some effects, but the relative potency of MG appears less than that of morphine. For example, Watanabe et al (1997) states “Mitragynine was 10 fold less potent than morphine.” It is also reported to be 5-fold weaker than

morphine in analgesiometric tests in mice and had a potency ratio of inhibitory effect on ileum contraction that was 6-fold less potent than that of morphine (Watanabe et al., 1997). Taken together these studies confirm that these molecules, which the investigators note are structurally distinct from opioids, do produce some opioid like effects. Furthermore, their relative potency and strength are far from fully characterized in laboratory models and is need of further research. Research is also need to assess the generality of such laboratory findings to human use and effect.

It should be noted that potency is often improperly equated with strength with respect to abuse potential and toxicity when all it really means is the relative quantity of a substance that is required to produce a specific effect, and not the strength of the effect. Thus, for example, nicotine appears to be at least 5-10 times more potent than cocaine in producing certain cocaine-like effects in animals and humans, including reinforcement (Goldberg et al., 1983). However, pure nicotine, despite its ready over the counter and commercial availability over most of the 20th century and presently, has never emerged as a substance of abuse or a public health threat in its own right. This is consistent with the fact that the strength of nicotine as a euphoriant and the generality of conditions in which it serves as a strong reinforcer is less than for cocaine (Goldberg et al., 1983; Henningfield & Goldberg, 1985; Henningfield et al., 2016). Moreover, despite tens of millions of users of nicotine and everyday exposures to nicotine-containing products by children and infants in the US, and many reports to poison control centers and emergency departments, there have been only a few deaths in children or adults that were attributed primarily to nicotine. For example, between January 2012 and April 2015, there was only one death associated with a nicotine or tobacco product among children under 6 years reported to the National Poison Data System (Kamboj et al., 2016).

Taken together, although progress has been made in understanding the pharmacology of kratom and MG and 7-OH-MG in particular, more research is needed to fully characterize the mechanisms of action that contribute to a novel profile of some opioid-like and stimulant-like effects that may be important in the consumption of kratom products. In the absence of clarity about the pharmacological mode of action, observed effects are the most reliable guide to the impact of kratom.

3.3 Factor 3: The state of current scientific knowledge regarding the drug or other substance

Kratom leaves and crushed or powdered leaves are readily available on the internet and in stores in most states, but this material is not reported to be used by nasal insufflation, smoking, or intravenously (in contrast to opioids and stimulants that are commonly used by such diverse routes to speed absorption and intensify their effects). In addition to the apparently low potential to produce strong effects sought by persons who abuse drugs, the physical nature of the leaf material with its high ratio of cellulose fiber likely deters use by such routes because large amounts of material would need to be placed in the

nose or smoked to produce effects. By analogy, caffeinated products are also not reportedly used by injection, smoking, or snorting likely in part because of relatively low potential to produce strong euphoriant effects as compared to cocaine (Garrett and Griffiths, 2001).

It would not likely be simple or inexpensive to extract and concentrate the MG or 7-OH-MG from kratom leaves, and it would require sophisticated equipment and chemistry training, but it would be theoretically possible. In Southeast Asia where the raw material is plentiful and there are many clandestine laboratories for synthesizing substances for abuse, kratom-derived products have not been a target, likely due to the apparently low abuse liability of mitragynine and limited euphoriant-like effects produced by the product. Furthermore, in contrast to the effects of increasing the dose of substances of high abuse potential (e.g., prototypic opioids, stimulants and sedatives), increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, and little additional mood enhancement.

In rodents, the analgesic effects of mitragynine have been evaluated in hot plate and tail-pinch tests. Administration of mitragynine (35 mg/kg) increased the pain threshold in hot plate tests, and its effects were inhibited by naloxone (1 mg/kg, i.p.) (Shamima et al., 2012). 7-OH-MG has also been reported to produce analgesia when evaluated in in vivo pharmacological studies. For example, Matsumoto et al. (2006) reported that when 7-OH-MG was administered subcutaneously (s.c.) in mice, there was an increase in the pain threshold for both the tail-flick ($ED_{50} = 0.80$ mg/kg, s.c.) and hot plate ($ED_{50} = 0.93$ mg/kg, s.c.) tests, and its effects were inhibited by naloxone. Comparatively, the ED_{50} of morphine (s.c.) in tail-flick and hot-plate tests are 4.57 mg/kg and 4.08 mg/kg, respectively (Matsumoto et al., 2006; Matsumoto and Horie, 2014).

The pharmacodynamic effects of kratom have been summarized in reviews (see Warner et al., 2016; Prozialeck, 2012). Kratom users can expect to experience full effects in about 30–60 min after ingestion, although onset can be noticeable within about 10–20 min. The half-lives of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG are about 3.5 and 2.5 h, respectively. Both are eliminated from the body primarily with the urine (Prozialeck, 2012; Neerman et al., 2013). The pharmacokinetics following oral administration of mitragynine in humans has been proposed as a two-compartment model based on the observed kinetics in ten healthy human male volunteers (Trakulsrichai et al., 2015). Certain conditions such as prior food consumption or taking kratom in capsule form can delay the initial response. The effects of kratom typically last about 5–7 h, with the strongest effects at about 2–4 h after ingestion, although weak aftereffects can be felt as late as the next day (Rosenbaum et al., 2012; Prozialeck, 2012; Scott et al., 2014; Maruyama et al., 2009). Current pharmacokinetic data in both animals and humans is limited, and there appears to be a significant variability within each species and differences between species in terms of mitragynine pharmacokinetics.

Approximately 1–5 g of raw leaves, which is defined as a low to moderate dose, will yield mild stimulant effects (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). The onset of effects begins to be experienced about 10 min or more after using a few grams of dried leaves (EMCDDA, 2015). This dosage amount is often related to the stimulant effects commonly used by labor workers in Southeast Asia to fight fatigue (Prozialeck, 2012). Not only has increased work capacity been reported by users, but alertness, sociability, and increased sexual desire are said to occur (EMCDDA, 2015). At this dose, the user may also possess normal to slightly contracted pupils and blushing. Unwanted side effects are generally minimal; however, anxiety and internal agitation have been described (Prozialeck, 2012).

Using from 5 to 15 g of kratom leaves may provide the user with pain and opioid withdrawal symptom relief (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). Both mitragynine and 7-OH-MG yield analgesic and antinociceptive effects. Euphoria is more often achieved at this higher level, but these effects tend to be less intense as compared with opioid drugs (Prozialeck, 2012).

When exceeding 15 g of kratom leaves, one would expect to experience stupor, mimicking the effects associated with opioids (EMCDDA, 2015; Prozialeck, 2012). Initially, sweating, dizziness, nausea, and dysphoria will often result. These effects quickly subside and are followed by calmness and a dreamlike state (EMCDDA, 2015).

Frequent users of kratom, primarily in Southeast Asia, have displayed instances of the atypical symptoms tremor, anorexia, weight loss, seizures, and psychosis (Hassan et al., 2013; Prozialeck, 2012). Such individuals are likely using high doses of kratom for a prolonged period of time (Hassan et al., 2013; Prozialeck, 2012). The relevance of these potential effects from a public health perspective appears low as suggested in the analysis of Factor 5 and 6; however, research on this issue should be continued and extended.

This analysis is consistent with the conclusions of other recent reviews of the state of kratom science, which reveal a novel substance in need of further research to better understand its mechanisms of action as well as effects, particularly in dosage forms relevant to oral consumption by humans.

3.4 Factor 4: Its history and current pattern of abuse

3.4.1 History

The history of kratom presence and consumption in the US is recent, compared to Southeast Asia, and not well documented. Anecdotal reports, e.g., by Hmong immigrants in the 1980s and 1990, suggest that the Hmong and other immigrants from the Southeast Asia region likely brought kratom consumption practices to the US, and discussions with some have suggested availability in some Asian food product stores

for many years (JEH discussions with Hmong community members in Minnesota). However, there has been little documentation of this in the literature other than anecdotal reports (see an anecdote reported in Axelrod and Windell, 2012, p.56). Broader commercial marketing of kratom products in the US by internet and in various health and natural food stores apparently began to increase in the early 2000s. A kratom industry survey estimated that by 2016, there were approximately 10,000 vendors selling kratom products in the US (Botanical Education Alliance, 2016).

Frequency of consumption of kratom, whether by consumption of home brewed liquids or commercial products, appears largely determined by individual preferences and reasons for consumption. For example, United Naturals reported that its average customer purchased and/or reported approximately 2-3 2oz (i.e., two “dose”) bottles per week, whereas other consumers make their own tea-like preparations on a daily basis. See the Appended testimonials collected by the American Kratom Association, which include descriptions of a range of patterns from daily to a few times per week to fit the needs and desires of the respondents. None of the users described consuming massive amounts of tea or hundreds of bottles in a single setting, as would apparently be required to produce the effects seen in the rodent studies described above.

Typical mode of kratom consumption

The most common mode of consumption in the US is in the form of liquids that are either prepared by consumers or purchased as manufactured products, often in small, 2 ounce containers as have become increasingly popular for caffeinated energy based “shot” drinks and other supplements. Consumers who prepare their own liquids use both hot and cold water extraction methods similar to making tea or coffee. Leaf material, which may be whole leaf but more commonly chopped or powdered, can be steeped or boiled, or cold water extracted. Lemon juice or other acids may be added to facilitate extraction. Sugar, honey, and other sweeteners and flavoring ingredients are often added to mask the generally perceived unpleasant and bitter taste of the liquids. A public health benefit of the general distasteful nature of the liquids is probably the discouragement of consumption by children. In fact, given the millions of preparations made in homes and sold by 10,000 vendors throughout the US, this may help contribute to apparently infrequent inadvertent consumption by children and reporting to emergency departments and poison centers in addition to the apparent intrinsic low acute toxicity of the mitragynines as discussed further on.

In Southeast Asia, leaf chewing is common as would be expected given the ready access to trees or inexpensive marketed harvested leaves. There have been some reports of leaf smoking in Southeast Asia but this does not appear common in Southeast Asia where product is readily available or in the US. This is in striking contrast to opioids which are rarely consumed as beverages or in foods and for which the preferred routes of use are smoking, injecting, and by nasal insufflation (“snorting”). There is a striking parallel in fact with respect to the stimulant caffeine, which is almost

exclusively consumed in the form of beverages, also used in many foods, but rarely consumed by routes that are typical of other stimulants such as cocaine and amphetamine which are often used by smoking, injecting, and by nasal insufflation. For further comparison, the kratom tree and the coffee tree are both tropical, deciduous, evergreens in the coffee family (Rubiaceae) native to Southeast Asia.

3.4.2 Federal Surveys

Monitoring the Future Survey (MTF) and Treatment Episodes Datasets (TEDS)

Among federal surveys, the youth and young adult targeted MTF survey and the TEDS were evaluated. MTF data are available through 2015 and TEDS through 2013. Neither of these surveys have reported kratom consumption or treatment seeking for kratom dependence, respectively. That does not mean there has been no abuse or kratom dependence treatment seeking; however, it does reflect the absence of signals and the lack of recommendations from affiliate researchers and treatment clinics that kratom abuse or dependence treatment should be added to the surveys at this time. Those systems, like most other such drug use and abuse-related surveillance systems, are designed and implemented so as to capture the emergence in trends of use, abuse and treatment needs. There may be a few years' lag time unless such problems are emerging rapidly and/or are considered public health priorities; however, given that kratom has been used in the US for decades, one would predict that, if kratom were emerging as a public health or abuse problem, it would have been evident from these surveys.

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH)

The NSDUH is generally considered to be a sensitive indicator of emerging trends in substance abuse, including adoption of new substances, and it includes collection of self-reported new and novel products and substances by its open-ended questions. Thus, although it does not yet include kratom/mitragynine-specific questions, since 2010 through the most recently published data release that covered 2014, there were a total of two (2) kratom mentions (unweighted – not nationally representative). By contrast, and over the same time frame, mentions of oxycodone, heroin, cocaine, amphetamine, marijuana, and other prototypic substances of abuse were in the many thousands. Aspirin mentions ranged from 17 to 22 per year, while diphenhydramine mentions ranged from 12 to 29 per year. See Table 2.

CONFIDENTIAL

Table 2. Number of Unweighted Cases of Kratom, Aspirin, Diphenhydramine, and Other Substances Reported to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2010-2014.

	NSDUH – Number of Unweighted Cases				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Kratom/Mitragynine [†]	1	0	0	0	1
Oxycodone [§]	2,068	2,097	2,017	1,877	1,835
Heroin [§]	771	826	829	842	946
Cocaine [§]	6,464	6,260	6,009	5,653	6,636
Amphetamine [§]	3,916	4,136	4,113	4,171	4,179
Marijuana [§]	22,842	22,994	22,238	22,163	23,462
Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) [†]	3	5	9	7	3
Diphenhydramine [†]	37	36	23	28	16

[†] unweighted non-medical use case mentions from open-ended response items only

[§] unweighted non-medical use case mentions from drug-specific and open-ended response items

3.4.3 Other Federal Data Sources Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN)

There have been no reports of kratom or mitragynines in the DAWN system; however, since DAWN monitoring ended as of December 31, 2011, all that can be concluded is that DAWN-detected signals were not occurring before 2012. It is telling, however, that when clearly high risk products such as fentanyl emerged even in small geographic areas, DAWN quickly picked up associated problems. Kratom likely had at least a decade of widespread use without generating any reports in the DAWN system.

National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS)

The NFLIS is a monitoring system of the Diversion Control Division of the DEA. It systematically collects and reports findings from drug chemistry analyses from law enforcement seizures (see <https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/nflis/>). The materials collected in seizures (e.g., during “drug busts” and drug dealer arrest operations) are analyzed by more than 300 state and local forensic laboratories nationwide. It thus provides a means of geographic tracking of what sorts of substances are being recovered, including diverted legally manufactured drugs, illicitly manufactured products (e.g., heroin and crack cocaine), and other substances and products.

Nearly two million analyses of drugs and other substances are tested annually. These include findings on opioids, depressants and tranquilizers, hallucinogens, anabolic steroids, and stimulants. These assessments thus provide statistically representative national and regional drug item estimates for the likelihood that a given substance will

be found together with the most frequently identified drugs, and thereby some sense of the mix of substances that have been collected in seizure operations. These reports are measures of seizures, not measures of actual use, abuse, adverse reactions, or overdose deaths.

Mitragynine was first reported in the NFLIS system in 2010. From 2013 to 2015, mitragynine reports accounted for approximately 0.01% of total reports. Specifically, 181 mitragynine reports were recorded in 2013 (out of 1,540,647 total reports), 137 in 2014 (out of 1,511,313 total reports), and 129 in 2015 (out of 1,549,466 total reports). The fact that these identifications were a new category, albeit at very low rates, led the DEA to place mitragynine on its “watch list,” meaning essentially that laboratories and investigators are encouraged to be alert for products potentially containing mitragynine and to be testing for mitragynine.

To provide some perspective of how mitragynine reports compare to opioids, Table 1 from the NFLIS July, 2015 special report on “Opiates and Related Drugs Reported in NFLIS, 2009-2014 (NFLIS, July, 2015)⁵ is shown below (See Table 3). Among these substances, heroin accounted for 699,847 (48.64%), followed by oxycodone at 285,381 (19.83%), and hydrocodone at 235,417 (16.36%), together accounting for approximately 85% of the 1,438,933 reports. Mitragynine reports totaled 42 (0.03%) in the second six months of 2011 and 88 (0.06%) in the first six months of 2014, and totaled 458 (0.03% overall) through June, 2014.

As confirmed by NFLIS, kratom is available to persons who have been found with substances of abuse, yet kratom has not emerged as a substance of abuse by any of the federal surveillance systems. This is not the profile of a substance with intrinsic activity indicative of a high risk of abuse, dependence, or addiction. It is more the profile of any number of substances including caffeinated products and over the counter medicines that are consumed and used by many people for the benefits that they provide, regardless of whether those individuals use, abuse, or distribute substances of abuse.

⁵ https://www.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/nflis/spec_rpt_opioids_2014.pdf.

CONFIDENTIAL

Table 3. National Semiannual Estimates of Selected Opiate and Related Drug Reports in NFLIS, 2009-2014.

Selected Drug	2009				2010				2011			
	Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Heroin	53,584	45.94%	55,194	46.11%	57,969	42.94%	52,361	42.60%	56,892	43.57%	58,444	46.37%
Oxycodone	22,483	19.27%	24,058	20.10%	31,050	23.00%	29,681	24.15%	30,406	23.29%	26,769	21.24%
Hydrocodone	23,444	20.10%	23,027	19.24%	25,885	19.17%	22,631	18.41%	23,144	17.72%	21,398	16.98%
Buprenorphine	3,313	2.84%	3,911	3.27%	5,422	4.02%	5,107	4.15%	5,427	4.16%	4,831	3.83%
Methadone	4,925	4.22%	4,898	4.09%	5,007	3.71%	4,295	3.49%	4,460	3.42%	4,136	3.28%
Morphine	3,519	3.02%	3,631	3.03%	3,898	2.89%	3,548	2.89%	3,973	3.04%	4,017	3.19%
Codeine	2,194	1.88%	1,848	1.54%	2,110	1.56%	1,771	1.44%	2,007	1.54%	1,970	1.56%
Hydromorphone	1,157	0.99%	1,109	0.93%	1,332	0.99%	1,205	0.98%	1,503	1.15%	1,421	1.13%
Tramadol	635	0.54%	728	0.61%	887	0.66%	807	0.66%	842	0.64%	885	0.70%
Oxymorphone	189	0.16%	172	0.14%	359	0.27%	473	0.38%	1,176	0.90%	1,551	1.23%
Fentanyl	270	0.23%	314	0.26%	320	0.24%	320	0.26%	324	0.25%	300	0.24%
Propoxyphene	751	0.64%	698	0.58%	636	0.47%	641	0.52%	336	0.26%	203	0.16%
Meperidine	184	0.16%	100	0.08%	136	0.10%	74	0.06%	83	0.06%	83	0.07%
Mitragynine	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	42	0.03%
Acetyl fentanyl	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Sufentanil	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total ²	116,647	100.00%	119,689	100.00%	135,012	100.00%	122,915	100.00%	130,574	100.00%	126,049	100.00%

Selected Drug	2012				2013				2014		Total	
	Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun		Jul-Dec		Jan-Jun			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Heroin	65,510	48.17%	65,453	49.83%	74,049	54.04%	75,430	56.31%	79,937	56.73%	694,822	48.58%
Oxycodone	27,053	19.89%	25,695	19.56%	23,854	17.41%	21,199	15.82%	21,507	15.26%	283,756	19.84%
Hydrocodone	21,901	16.10%	20,042	15.26%	18,834	13.75%	17,389	12.98%	16,951	12.03%	234,647	16.41%
Buprenorphine	5,614	4.13%	5,672	4.32%	5,635	4.11%	6,281	4.69%	7,261	5.15%	58,474	4.09%
Methadone	4,199	3.09%	3,657	2.78%	3,539	2.58%	3,014	2.25%	2,931	2.08%	45,062	3.15%
Morphine	4,467	3.28%	4,336	3.30%	4,123	3.01%	3,743	2.79%	3,976	2.82%	43,231	3.02%
Codeine	1,908	1.40%	1,729	1.32%	1,628	1.19%	1,715	1.28%	1,520	1.08%	20,400	1.43%
Hydromorphone	1,988	1.46%	2,273	1.73%	2,600	1.90%	2,383	1.78%	2,351	1.67%	19,321	1.35%
Tramadol	1,134	0.83%	977	0.74%	1,279	0.93%	1,135	0.85%	1,346	0.96%	10,653	0.74%
Oxymorphone	1,591	1.17%	889	0.68%	823	0.60%	904	0.67%	901	0.64%	9,029	0.63%
Fentanyl	316	0.23%	328	0.25%	380	0.28%	554	0.41%	1,989	1.41%	5,414	0.38%
Propoxyphene	198	0.15%	127	0.10%	105	0.08%	102	0.08%	77	0.05%	3,874	0.27%
Meperidine	76	0.06%	55	0.04%	63	0.05%	44	0.03%	41	0.03%	940	0.07%
Mitragynine	46	0.03%	110	0.08%	105	0.08%	68	0.05%	77	0.05%	448	0.03%
Acetyl fentanyl	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	6	0.00%	43	0.03%	49	0.00%
Sufentanil	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.00%
Total ²	136,002	100.00%	131,342	100.00%	137,015	100.00%	133,966	100.00%	140,909	100.00%	1,430,120	100.00%

¹ Includes drug reports submitted to laboratories from January 1, 2009, through June 30, 2014, that were analyzed within three months of the end of each six-month period.

² Numbers and percentages may not sum to totals because of rounding.

3.5 Factor 5: The scope, duration, and significance of abuse

As discussed in Factor 4 above, there appears to be little, if any, abuse of kratom in the US. To the extent to which benefits are provided by consumption of kratom-derived products, these appear possible with remarkably low risks of serious adverse effects as compared to opioids and there is little evidence or apparent risk that kratom products are used by routes other than oral beverage or food consumption, even though it is certainly theoretically possible to smoke, snort, or inject kratom extracts.

3.5.1 Internet monitoring

The dramatic growth of the Internet in the past 20 years has substantially changed the dissemination of ideas, contributed to trends in product use and misuse, and added new means of monitoring emerging substances. There are many websites that focus specifically on drug misuse and abuse, some intended to discourage such use as well as those that appear dedicated to providing information in support of, if not to encourage, misuse and abuse of drugs. An important limitation of the data is that they do not necessarily relate to incidence, prevalence, or to increases or decreases in population trends. For example, a single provocative posting might precipitate a series of postings (known as a “thread”) thereby creating a “bump” in the number of postings on a given topic which may not necessarily be related to population trends. Also, as is apparent by even a casual review of such websites, they including postings that can strain credulity. Thus, teams such as our group at PinneyAssociates led by Dr. Edward Cone, and the FDA’s Controlled Substances Staff, have learned to be careful in relying on such information for more than qualitative insights concerning the diversity of opinion and responses related to substances. Nonetheless, such insights, when compared against known pharmacology and epidemiology, can be useful in guiding policy including risk management efforts.

With the foregoing caveats in mind, and understanding that PinneyAssociates has not conducted an extensive evaluation of internet postings, the following provides representative examples of serious substance abusing persons who appear to have made efforts to compare kratom to their preferred substances.

Taken together, most of the postings involve what appear to be extremely high dosages of kratom substances and extracts, and self-made extracts from a variety of kratom sources: for example, users may combine several grams of kratom powder, several ounces of kratom leaves, and indeterminate forms of this or other substances. Some people have reported experiencing intoxication, euphoria, and other effects at these very high dosages, though typically, their comparisons to other drugs provide a basis for understanding why kratom and kratom products apparently are rarely the substance of choice among people who seek abused drugs and are in search of better ways to get better highs and euphoria. There are self-reports of dependence and withdrawal, but these tended to involve extremely high intakes of kratom, apparently along with other substances.

Table 4 provides what PinneyAssociates’ experience offers as a reasonable representation of kratom experiences.

Table 4. Verbatim accounts from Internet reports from a website that typically attracts people with histories of diverse substance use and abuse to describe their experiences

<http://www.bluelight.org/vb/threads/398307-Kratom-experiences>.

CONFIDENTIAL

27-09-2008 03:28: Here's my personal opinion, others have had better experiences: Kratom offers a pleasing buzz, but it only lasts about an hour. Then it's gone and I can't redose for another 12 or so hours. It just won't work again if I try to dose sooner. When I use it every day, the buzz gets less and less until it's practically worthless. Kratom just didn't do me very well. I hope you have a better experience with it.

27-09-2008 04:28: Kratom is somewhat self limiting when it comes to abuse, or daily recreational use, yes. Each day you use it, it becomes a bit less warm and less euphoric. But its pain relieving properties continue after those effects fade. Even after continued daily use there will always be noticeable anxiety relieving, and pain relieving properties. You can avoid losing some of the glow and euphoria by switching to different strains every so often.

27-09-2008 08:15: After LOVING oxy to death and losing my source, I sought out some Kratom to act as a substitute. If you're expecting something amazing, you will definitely be disappointed. It DOES feel like an opiate, kind of, but it's very very limited. I tried several strains in several different dosages, and yeah, it doesn't have that much to offer. Doing too much is awful - I felt nauseous for DAYS. Doing too little is just boring. There IS somewhat of a sweet spot but it just doesn't scratch where I itch, compared to oxy (and I never did that much oxy that frequently, and I hadn't in weeks before kratom, and so it's not just an addiction thing).

28-09-2008 05:49: Personally I like the taste of pod tea, the stronger the better. It's preferable to the odd taste of kratom (even though I will drink kratom tea straight as well). But Kratom has a numbing sensation on my mouth when I drink it, like pins and needles on the tongue. I've never really felt too much from kratom. I've had the so-called 10x extracts and the leaves, with the extracts I'd just down them with a lot of water, and with the leaves just make some tea. I'd say that the effects were a bit stronger from the leaves, however. I had to use about 1/4 an ounce, which (if I remember correctly) was a few cups of tea...a french press would probably be even more effective, though. Subjectively the effects felt similar to a moderate dose of tramadol...especially the serotonergic wakefulness type of feeling. It was great for staving off withdrawals, but I couldn't see it being my drug of choice. After a certain point taking more kratom doesn't seem to increase or prolong the euphoria much. I'm willing to bet though that people who have never been addicted to opiates would enjoy this drug much more than those who are or have been.

28-09-2008 06:00: "Yes the taste of Kratom tea is disgusting. That's why tea is no longer the preferred method of ingestion by Kratom users. We use TNW= puddle on tongue, plop kratom in, swallow, follow with water. You won't feel too much from kratom. It's very subtle for most. The extracts are usually unbalanced and stimulative, rather than relaxing and euphoric. You took far too many leaves. I did the same thing when I first tried Kratom. You only need 2-3 tea spoons. Taking too much will make you sick, or could even ruin the effects all together. I guess you can't really take it and then just

forget you took it. You need to recognize the effects and focus on them to feel nice. And yes, Re-dosing Kratom is useless, you will feel nothing more. It may make the aroma last longer, but it wont increase the potency of the smell."

Similarly, Swogger et al. (2015) conducted a qualitative analysis of first-hand descriptions of human kratom consumption that were submitted to, and published by, a psychoactive substance information website (Erowid.org) as "experience reports." For such participation in the Erowid system people are asked to self-administer the substance, often at high dosage levels, and then report their effects over the next 8 hours. A caveat, based on the experience of the authors of this report, is that Erowid site participants would seem more likely than people in the general population to be heavy users and poly drug users and abusers, including many in this survey with self-reported use and dependence to prototypic opioids, cocaine, and other drugs.

Four general themes emerged as associated with kratom product consumption (see Swogger et al., 2015 for greater detail):

1. Positive experiences was the most prominent theme with euphoria occurring in 30.4% of the respondents especially at high dosages, relaxation in 23.6%, and increased energy in 8.7%.
2. Negative experiences including nausea, stomachache, and cramping occurred in 16.1%. This included alternating chills and sweats in 9.3%, dizziness and unsteadiness in 6.8%, and vomiting in 3.1%.
3. Neutral experiences occurred in about 10% of the respondents, which included numbness of the throat and mouth, visual alterations, and sedation.
4. Substitution occurred in 10.6%, meaning that 10.6% used kratom as a substitute for an unwanted substance. This included 9.9% who used kratom to relieve symptoms of withdrawal from another substance.

Themes that emerged from these experience reports indicate that kratom may be useful for analgesia, mood elevation, and anxiety reduction, and may aid opioid withdrawal management. Negative response themes also emerged, indicating potential problems and unfavorable "side" effects, especially stomach upset and vomiting.

A number (10.6%) of individuals reported successfully using kratom as a substitute to help abstain from the use of other substances perceived as addictive and/or causing harm. These substances were primarily opioids, such as oxycodone and heroin, but also included benzodiazepines and antidepressants. In addition to substitution, 9.9% of

the sample reported withdrawal symptoms after using kratom. The consumers generally perceived their withdrawal symptoms to be milder than, but similar to, those caused by withdrawal from opiates. Only five percent of the sample reported tolerance to kratom, including a willingness to take higher doses in order to achieve the same effect. Finally, 4.3% of experience reports referenced hangover-like symptoms such as headache and nausea on the day after ingestion of kratom.

3.5.2 Dr. Oliver Grundmann Preliminary Report on Kratom Use and the Health Impact of Kratom Consumption – An online anonymous survey

Concluding our analysis of CSA Factor 5 is a summary of a few of the particularly relevant findings from the most comprehensive, relevant, and well-designed systematic internet survey of kratom users that has been done. It includes information from more than 9550 kratom users collected in October of 2016. The survey was designed “to provide [data for] stakeholders involved in kratom regulation, consumption, and current availability to better understand the current users statistics and the impact of kratom on health and specific conditions” in the US.

This survey was conducted by Oliver Grundmann, PhD, Department of Medicinal Chemistry, College of Pharmacy, University of Florida. Dr. Grundmann is Clinical Associate Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, and co-author of the Warner et al. review relied on in this 8 Factor Analysis. The study was conducted with the approval of the University of Florida Institutional Review Board. These findings have been extracted from a preliminary analysis of the report that is in preparation for publication by Dr. Grundmann, and the following summary was approved by Dr. Grundmann for inclusion in this 8 Factor Analysis. It is the opinion of the authors of this analysis that these findings and many other findings in the Grundmann study are highly relevant to consideration of the appropriateness of kratom for CSA scheduling, and that the findings would also be invaluable to FDA in its potential consideration of kratom’s profile of consumption, effects, and health impact in the community. We encourage FDA, NIDA, and DEA to consult with Dr. Grundmann for a more extensive presentation of these findings if actions are considered prior to their publication.

Dr. Grundmann describes the general nature and intent of the study as follows: *“It is intended to provide stakeholders involved in Kratom regulation, consumption, and current availability to better understand the current user statistics and the impact of Kratom on health and specific conditions. It is not meant to be comprehensive or necessarily reflect the breadth of specific beneficial and adverse effects of Kratom. Rather, it serves as a basis for further research and to provide all stakeholders with a current snapshot of Kratom use in the US.”*

Total # of respondents who consented to participate: 9,550

CONFIDENTIAL

Age range: 54.17% were between the ages of 31-50, 29% younger than 30

Gender: 42.75% of respondents were female

Marital status: 1/3 were single/never married, 53.37% are married or partnered

Race: predominantly (89%) white

Employment: 57% employed for wages, 15% self-employed, 6% homemakers, 3.5% retired

Insurance coverage: 47% insurance through employer, 14% insurance through self-employment, 14.4% no insurance, 15.5% Medicare or Medicaid

Education: 82% at least some college (AA) or higher

Household income: 15% 35K-49K, 18.8% 50K-74K, 28.2% 75K and higher

The following findings are considered by Henningfield and Fant, and other PinneyAssociates experts to be particularly important in helping FDA in its evaluation of kratom given the size, scope, and design of the study and the fact that these variables are highly relevant to understanding reasons for consumption, consequences of consumption, and the consequences of a regulatory action that would prevent such individuals from obtaining kratom products. The Grundmann survey provides additional and complimentary information to the American Kratom Association's collection of testimonials from Kratom users (Attachment A), and would seem to provide an important quantitative basis for understanding the representativeness of those testimonials and for projecting to the broader population of perhaps 2 million or more American kratom users.

About 84% of the respondents self-reported good to very good health.

About 98% reported "currently" using kratom-containing products.

About 61% reported consumption in the form of powdered kratom consumed with a beverage or self-prepared kratom tea.

Less than 1% used store-bought liquid kratom (shot).

About 21% experienced some negative effects and these were predominantly nausea, constipation and other GI related.

Less than 1% reported needing health care treatment "because of your kratom use."

About 98% reported that a ban on kratom would negatively affect them.

Whereas most would support "regulating the quality of kratom products on the US market" about 90% answered "no" to the question: "Would you support categorizing Kratom as a medication that requires consultation with a pharmacist before purchase?"

Taken together, these and other findings reported by Grundmann provide a recent and informative characterization of kratom use and effects in the community, with the vast majority of the nearly 10,000 respondents reporting consumption for varied benefits, intake likely limited by undesired but apparently mild and tolerable GI and other effects, and little evidence of effects of medical or public health concern. The reports support the conclusion that removal of kratom from the market would be viewed highly negatively and the demand would likely drive many to illicit sources of kratom.

3.5.3 Testimonials Regarding Benefits

Consistent with the survey cited above, Attachment A provides a number of testimonials from kratom users regarding the perceived benefits of kratom.

The testimonials provide qualitative and personal insights that complement the quantitative and qualitative survey of Dr. Grundmann. The profile that emerges is that kratom is consumed primarily for general and specific life and life-style enhancing reasons. For many, the reasons include its value as a natural remedy for ailments. These consumers believe that kratom is more satisfactory than conventional medicines with respect to apparent effectiveness and has fewer undesirable side-effects than conventional medicines. Interestingly, this is not because kratom is devoid of any side effects. Indeed, many consumers report apparently readily tolerable gastrointestinal effects including some “stomach upset,” mild nausea, and constipation that apparently function to limit intake but are acceptable and tolerated in a natural therapy. From the perspective of abuse potential, to the extent to which such effects serve to mitigate the dose escalation that is so prominent with many known substances of abuse, including opioids, this is a highly favorable profile that may be part of the reason that abuse and abuse potential in the community appears very low.

3.6 Factor 6: What, if any, risk there is to the public health

As mentioned earlier, kratom products have been widely marketed and consumed as dietary supplements and natural remedies since at least the early 2000s. In collaboration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the FDA “estimated the number of emergency department visits for adverse events associated with dietary supplements in the United States using 10 years of data (from January 1, 2004, through December 3, 2013) from the 63 hospitals participating in the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System-Cooperative Adverse Drug Event Surveillance (NEISS-CADES) project conducted by the CDC, the FDA, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission” (Geller et al., 2015). Projecting from 3667 cases, they estimated an average of 23,005 such emergency department visits annually, with 2154 hospitalizations annually. One fifth of the supplement-related visits involved unsupervised ingestion by children. The vast majority of the emergency visits involved products used for weight loss, energy, and sexual enhancement involving substance

such as kava, hydroxytryptophan, caffeine, ephedra, ginseng, and yohimbine root. Less than 2% involved products used for pain or arthritis relief and these included substances such as arnica, glucosamine, and pokeweed. None were reported to have involved kratom or mitragynines. This does not mean that there actually had been none involving kratom or mitragynines, but certainly the public health signal through this major reporting system was very small and not indicative of a major public health problem.

In a recent review of the toxicology of mitragynine and analogs, Ramanathan and Mansor (2015, p. 282) concluded as follows: “To date there have been no reports of fatal overdose of kratom *per se*. If there are such occurrences, they are probably the result of kratom products contaminated with synthetic adulterants.” This is consistent with other reviews of kratom pharmacology, toxicology, and epidemiology (Warner et al. 2016). In fact, if kratom products were banned from the market, it appears likely that many users would turn to the illicit market that would immediately expand to meet the demand. In that marketplace, there would be no oversight by FDA and no basis for consumers to be assured of product purity and contents. Moreover, the illicit market is also a competitive marketplace. It is reasonable to assume that many illicit product manufacturers and distributors would be likely to spike their products with various other substances in order to support their claims such as “Special Product X” (possibly with added synthetic cannabinoids to provide claimed increased mood altering effects); “Special Product Relief” (possibly with added synthetic opioids to increase pain relief); “Special Product S” (possibly with added synthetic stimulants to increase the stimulant effects) and so on. Replacement of the licit market (and a licit market that would hopefully thrive with increased FDA oversight) with the illicit market would invariably precipitate public health problems, serious adverse events, and associated overdose deaths that would pose far greater risks to the public health.

Despite the availability of more concentrated kratom based solutions, the production of some swallowable products, and some smoking in Southeast Asia, consumption of oral liquids and leaf chewing appears to vastly predominate. In fact, use by injection of extracted and concentrated alkaloids and nasal insufflation are not reported in Southeast Asia despite the fact that such routes (as well as smoking) are common in the same regions for opioids. This is another similarity with caffeine, which theoretically could be concentrated and injected, as has been done in human research (Garrett and Griffiths, 2001), yet globally the oral liquid consumption overwhelmingly predominates. Efforts to intensify the effects of kratom products by the approaches typical of opioids and stimulants, namely by injecting and snorting, have not been reported. Although there have been some reports of leaf smoking in Southeast Asia, this does not appear to be a common practice and consumption by smoking has not been reported in the US. This is consistent with the relatively low apparent intrinsic attractiveness of the alkaloids to persons who abuse drugs and are typically seeking strong stimulation, intoxication, sedation, and/or euphoria as can be produced by prototypical drugs of abuse such as

amphetamine and cocaine types of stimulants, alcohol and controlled sedatives, and scheduled opioids, but are not found with kratom.

3.6.1 American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System (AAPCC-NPDS)

The AAPCC-NPDS is considered a timely and sensitive system for tracking the emergence of trends in use-related effects and for capturing relatively low frequency events. From 2000 to 2005, a total of two (2) kratom-related exposures were reported to AAPCC; however, from 2010 to 2015, a total of 660 kratom-related calls were received (increasing from 26 in 2010 to 263 in 2015).⁶ Kratom has not yet reached the threshold for inclusion as a separate product in annual AAPCC reports. The most recent report currently available is 2014. While the number of kratom calls for 2014 is not known, a reasonable proxy would be the 263 known kratom-related calls from 2015. In comparison, there were 55,151 diphenhydramine⁷-related calls, 18,470 aspirin⁸-related calls, and 1,355 nicotine pharmaceutical-related calls in 2014 (e.g., nicotine gum, patch, and lozenge).

3.6.2 Pediatric/Child (less than 6 years of age) exposure related adverse events and deaths.

An important consideration in public health and safety is the risks to children. Simply stated, we have been unable to document any deaths related to kratom exposure in children, or even evidence of serious adverse events or emergency department admissions for children attributed to kratom product exposure. This has included a review of federal surveillance systems including the AAPCC-NPDS described above, and internet searches for local and national media that typically report such events as news stories. This does not mean that no such events have occurred, but it does suggest that the signal is very weak and that any exposures that have occurred have not been associated with severe consequences. The rates of exposures and adverse events in children, which are apparently below the threshold of detection, are particularly striking in that they do not reflect a dearth of marketed and sold products. To the contrary, kratom products are sold by an estimated 10,000 vendors, and

⁶ <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6529a4.htm>.

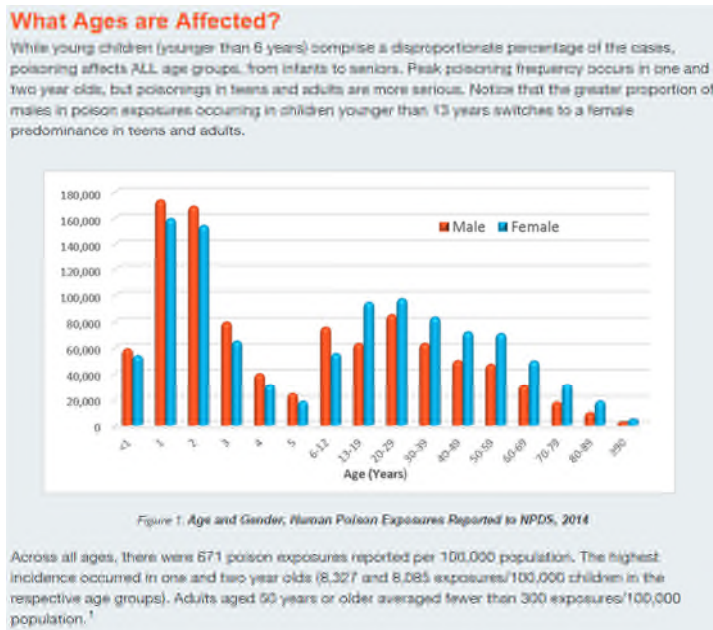
⁷ Diphenhydramine alone or in combination

⁸ Aspirin only; does not include combination products

purchased, prepared, and used by millions of Americans in a wide variety of products constituting an approximately 200 million dollar market. Furthermore, to date there has been minimal guidance from FDA concerning packaging, allowable alkaloid content of manufactured products, labeling, and other guidance to minimize risks and promote safe storage and disposal. This is not an argument against such FDA oversight. To the contrary, appropriate guidance and regulation would be expected to help sustain low rates of inappropriate exposures and to minimize unintended consequences in children and adults. Nonetheless, the absence of adverse events in children and low prevalence of serious adverse events in adults is testament to the apparently intrinsic low hazard potential of kratom as marketed and used in the US.

The following figures are from the National Capital Poison Center (2016). These are provided to illustrate the importance of considering children under age 6 as a crucial population in evaluating the safety of opioids, and to provide in this report a context for the evaluation of the health impact and safety of kratom.

This figure does not reflect or include any kratom-related poisonings since none had been reported by publication of these data.



Most Common Substances Implicated in Poison Exposures?

Cosmetics and personal care products lead the list of the most common substances implicated in **pediatric exposures** (children younger than 6 years, NPDS, 2014). Cleaning substances and pain medications follow. These exposures are nearly always unintentional.

	No.	%
Cosmetics & Personal Care Products	150,530	14.0
Cleaning Substances	118,207	11.0
Analgesics	100,399	9.3
Foreign Bodies/Toys/Miscellaneous	72,099	6.7
Topical Preparations	62,053	5.8
Vitamins	48,214	4.5
Antihistamines	45,915	4.3
Pesticides	35,152	3.3
GI preparations	28,460	2.7
Plants	27,941	2.6

Pain medications are the single most frequent cause of pediatric fatalities reported to Poison Control. That's a skewed picture, because carbon monoxide deaths are under-reported. The table below shows poisoning fatalities in children younger than 6 years reported to US Poison Control from 2010 through 2014.

	No.	%
Analgesics	133	19.2
Fumes/Gases/Vapors	86	12.4
Cold and Cough Preparations	49	7.1
Antihistamines	38	5.5
Hydrocarbons	29	4.2
Sedative/Hypnotics/Antipsychotic	29	4.2
Cleaning Substances (Household)	28	4.0
Antidepressants	26	3.8
Cardiovascular Drugs	23	3.3
Alcohols	19	2.7
Stimulants and Street Drugs	18	2.6
Batteries	17	2.5
Pesticides	17	2.5

The substance categories with the largest number of deaths across all ages (and including intentional exposures) include acetaminophen-containing medications, sedatives and sleeping medications, cardiovascular drugs, opioids, stimulants and street drugs, and alcohols (NPDS, 2014).

As summarized above, many types of products are routinely reported as child exposures to poison control centers. Kratom-related poisonings had not been reported to the NPDS at the time of publication of these data. The foregoing does not guarantee that exposure and adverse events will not occur in the future, even if they have not yet occurred. Despite efforts to minimize the risks and consequences of such exposures, across the nation, many children do and likely will continue to be able to ingest all nature of household and industrial products including cleaning products, agricultural products, glues, solvents, plants, chemicals, drugs, tobacco, nicotine liquids, and other potentially harmful substances. Minimizing such risks is a benefit of product regulation

that ensures child resistant packaging as appropriate to the product, education, and labeling to ensure safe use, handling, and storage. Kratom products will presumably be evaluated by FDA to ensure appropriate packaging, labeling, and education; in that way, FDA can be confident that current and future kratom products pose minimal risks to children.

The following three plausible factors contribute to the apparent very low risk that kratom products pose to children, as well as to adults:

1. Low toxicity and harm potential of kratom and its alkaloids
2. Poor taste of even commercially marketed products with a commonly described “yuck” factor that would be expected to discourage consumption by children
3. Relatively low concentrations of alkaloids apparent in most marketed products and in raw leaf material

3.6.3 Ex-US Safety/Toxicity Data

Kratom consumption is quite high in Southeast Asia, with likely over 1 million regular adult users in Thailand alone. Heavy use by laborers, plentiful and inexpensive supplies of raw material, and hundreds of years of history of use have provided both experience in consumption as well as countless millions of exposures and opportunities for overdose deaths and other serious adverse health consequences if there were a high risk of such. Yet fewer than 100 serious adverse events associated with kratom consumption have been reported from Southeast Asia. A limitation of safety data from Southeast Asia is that much kratom consumption likely occurs in rural areas with limited reporting systems. Nonetheless, in contrast to opioid abuse and dependence, kratom consumption is not considered a major public health problem.

In an exploratory ethnographic survey of 149 long-term regular users of kratom (who chewed the leaves) in Thailand, the percentage of users reporting the negative effects of using kratom was relatively low (4–14% of all users) (Assanangkornchai et al., 2007). The negative effects included a perception of less productivity, a decreased sexual drive, fatigue, poor health, wasteful spending habits, dizziness, poor concentration and distractedness, difficulty sleeping, wasting working time, irritability, poor thinking ability, impaired memory, laziness, and social withdrawal. The perceived benefits of kratom consumption included helping users work longer and harder, feeling happy/sprightly, maintaining a good mood, sleeping soundly, and being healthy. In Thailand, the benefits of consumption, as reported by users and nonusers alike, appear to predominate over the negative effects, although these conclusions come from research that is more ethnographic characterization than clinical trial type research.

The safety of low doses of MG has also been evaluated in animal toxicology studies. Hassan and colleagues (2013) reviewed the data on the toxicology of MG as follows: In animal models, the toxicity of MG was claimed to be relatively low. Macko and colleagues (1972) found no evidence of toxicity, measured as tremors or convulsions, at doses as high as 920 mg/kg in dogs. A more recent study in rats reported lethal effects of 200 mg/kg total alkaloid extract of *M. speciosa* given intragastrically (Azizi et al., 2010). The actual amounts of MG as compared to other alkaloids were not reported by Azizi, and the specific relevance to human safety is limited, because humans consume far less than 200 mg/kg. Janchawee and colleagues (2007) reported lethal effects after an oral dose of 200 mg MG in rats.

Sabetghadam and colleagues (2013) administered three doses of MG (1, 10, 100mg/kg, p.o.) to rats for 28 days respectively. The groups of rats treated with the lower and intermediate doses showed no toxic effects during the study. Only relative liver weight increased after treatment with the high dose of MG (100mg/kg) in both the male and female treatment groups of rats. Biochemical and hematological parameters were also altered, especially in the high dose treatment group, which corresponds to the histopathological changes. Another study, also mentioned below in a summary of addiction potential studies is relevant to safety although it was designed to assess physical dependence and withdrawal at very high dosage relative to typical human consumption (Yusoff et al., 2016). Laboratory rats were given 30 mg/kg/day i.p., equating to an oral dose of about 990 mg/kg – equivalent to over 800 human 2-ounce doses. Some evidence of dependence and withdrawal were demonstrated but not lethality.

3.6.4 Deaths Possibly Involving Kratom

To date, there have been no reports of fatal overdose from kratom *per se* (Raffa, 2015, and references cited therein). Although there has been little systematic study of the pharmacodynamic effects of kratom, there is little clinical or scientific evidence of respiratory depression, and this would be consistent with the absence of documented overdose deaths attributable to kratom. Fourteen deaths potentially related to kratom had been reported globally until the DEA August posting in the Federal Register (see below). Of these, nine occurred in Sweden and appeared to have been related to consumption of an herbal blend called Krypton that was adulterated with O-desmethyltramadol, an active metabolite of the analgesic drug tramadol, which has been documented to carry a risk of severe respiratory depression and overdose death (Backstrom et al., 2010). The other five, three in the US, one in Norway, and one in Thailand, included co-administration of other drug substances. As a result, the actual cause of death is not clear.

In its analysis, DEA reported the following regarding deaths related to kratom in its Factor 6 analysis:

CONFIDENTIAL

Deaths related to kratom exposure have been reported in the scientific literature beginning in 2009-2010, with a cluster of nine deaths in Sweden from use of the kratom product “Krypton” (Kronstrand et al, 2011). Since then, five more deaths related to kratom exposure were reported in the scientific literature (Holler et al., 2011, Neerman et al., 2013, Karinen et al., 2014, McIntyre, 2015, Anwar et al., 2016), and at least 16 additional deaths connected to kratom exposure, have been confirmed by autopsy/medical examiner reports (mitragynine and/or 7-hydroxymitragynine were identified in biological samples). Of these deaths, 15 occurred between 2014 and 2016 (citing Autopsy/Medical Examiner (ME) reports on file with DEA).

DEA has not made available information that would enable assessment of the basis for concluding that kratom was “connected” to the “16 additional deaths” (beyond the 14 discussed above and elsewhere (Henningfield, 2015; Warner et al., 2016)). As demonstrated by the referenced sources in the DEA document, there has never been a published report in the literature of a death solely attributable to kratom, but rather these reported cases involved the ingestion of kratom along with pharmaceuticals or controlled substances known to present risk of death. These reports as summarized by the FDA document seem to agree with the general finding that these deaths were not solely attributable to kratom and generally leave the potential role of kratom unclear. For example, in the case of the nine deaths in Sweden occurring late 2009 to early 2010, the product ingested was not pure kratom, but rather a product called “Krypton.” Laboratory analyses identified mitragynine and O-desmethylnaloxone (known substances in Krypton blend) and other substances in blood samples of the deceased (Kronstrand et al., 2011). Several other cases of deaths involving multiple drugs are described in the DEA review as described in the table below. The contributing role of kratom, if any, cannot be ascertained, and interpreting these as “kratom-caused” or “Kratom overdoses” is certainly beyond the evidence.

Source	Drugs Involved
Neerman et al. (2013)	Mitragynine and therapeutic levels of dextromethorphan, temazepam, 7-amino-clonazepam, and a slightly elevated level of diphenhydramine in blood samples
Karinen et al. (2014)	Mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine, zipiclone, citalopram, and lamotrigine in blood samples
McIntyre et al. (2015)	Mitragynine, along with therapeutic levels of venlafaxine, diphenhydramine, mirtazapine, and ethanol
Medical Examiner for Palm Beach, Florida (2014)	Mitragynine along with venlafaxine, fentanyl, amphetamine, and caffeine
Medical Examiner for Dekalb County, GA (2015)	Mitragynine, along with fentanyl, benzodiazepines, and cannabinoids

CONFIDENTIAL

Medical Examiner for San Diego, CA (2015)	Mitragynine, along with methadone and alprazolam
Medical Examiner for San Diego, CA (2015)	Mitragynine, fentanyl, alprazolam, and an active clonazepam metabolite
Medical Examiner for San Diego, CA (2015)	Mitragynine, along with alcohol, benzodiazepines, and opiates

There was also a case of suicide in 2016, in which a 56-year old man was found with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. The decedent had a history of alcohol and drug abuse. Laboratory analyses identified mitragynine and caffeine in blood samples. The cause of death, as determined by the Medical Examiner, was gunshot wound to the head. It is doubtful that consumption of kratom was in any way related to this death.

There were, however, three cases reported in the DEA analysis (DEA, 2016) in which kratom appeared to contribute to the death, though the mechanisms are not clear and the nature of the deaths seemed widely varied, possibly reflecting chronic heavy consumption of kratom and possibly other substances, as opposed to overdose death caused by opioid respiratory depression. One was a case of severe hypoxic encephalopathy complicating apparent mitragynine toxicity. The second case was determined by the Medical Examiner to be acute mitragynine (kratom) intoxication. The amount of mitragynine found in the liver was 200 times more than reported by McIntyre et al. (2015), where mitragynine intoxication was concluded to be the primary cause of death. In the third case, kratom products ("Green Malaysian", "Yellow Vein Maeng Da", and "Red Borneo"), and vials labeled U-47700 were found at the scene of the death. Laboratory analyses of blood samples identified the presence of mitragynine and the opioid antagonist naloxone. The cause of death, as determined by the Medical Examiner, was probable polypharmacy overdose.

A recently published, peer-reviewed article outlines well the position of the published studies: "Although death has been attributed to kratom consumption, there is no solid evidence that kratom was the sole contributor to an individual's death" (Warner et al., 2016). We do not rule out the possibility that there have been overdose deaths involving extremely high doses of kratom; however, to date, we have been unable to document a single death in which kratom overdose can reasonably be concluded to have been "causal" in the death. By any measure this is in stark contrast with what has been documented for most recognized drugs and substances of abuse. For example, CDC reported data for 2014, with limitations acknowledged, in which deaths were reasonably concluded to have been categorized substantially, if not exclusively, to an opioid (28,647 in 2014 or nearly 80 per day) or other drugs most notably including sedatives, alcohol, and stimulants (18,408 or about 50 per day) for a total of 47,055 or about 129 per day (Rudd et al., 2016).

As mentioned earlier the very low risk of overdose poisoning and serious adverse events does not mean that they have not and will not occur. However, given the two

decades during which consumption has increased to an estimated two or more million consumers in the US, in addition to far more extensive consumption in Southeast Asia, this is a substance and category of product with a remarkable safety record. It is not the profile of a serious or emerging public health problem that warrants drastic actions that would prohibit kratom consumers from continuing to lawfully purchase kratom. The safety record is all the more impressive given that kratom products have been marketed, prepared, and consumed without the level of regulatory oversight that is present for many other dietary supplements and natural products under the FDCA. Balanced and appropriate regulation seems vital to maintain the safety record. This should be accompanied by increased surveillance to better guide kratom regulation going into the future.

3.7 Factor 7: Its psychic or physiological dependence liability

There have not been adequate studies of physical or psychological dependence or abuse potential in humans caused by kratom. MG in high doses has been shown to produce physical dependence in rats. Yusoff et al. (2016) tested rats that received MG (30 mg/kg; i.p.) for 14 days and observed increased locomotor activity after withdrawal. MG induced a sensitized locomotor activation, which was significant after 7 and 14 days of treatment. There were no effects on locomotor activity during the subsequent three days of withdrawal. On measures of anxiety during withdrawal, the authors found no effects on anxiety after 12 hours of abstinence. However, after 24 hours and 48 hours, there was a significant decline in open arm time suggesting withdrawal-induced anxiety. MG withdrawal induced a paw tremor, body tremor, wet-dog shakes, ptosis, piloerection, teeth chattering, and grooming 12 hours after withdrawal. Except paw tremor and grooming, all effects were still present 48 hours after withdrawal. Most of the effects disappeared after 72 hours. The 30 mg/kg injected dose in this study would equate to an oral dose of 990 mg/kg. Converting this to a human equivalent dose based on body surface area, this would equate to approximately 160 mg/kg in humans, or over 11 grams of MG taken orally by a 70 kg human. The total alkaloid content in kratom leaves ranges from 0.5 to 1.5% (Hassan et al., 2013). Mitragynine makes up approximately 60% of this extract (Prozialeck et al., 2012; Philipp, et al., 2010; Kapp et al., 2011). Based on this, 1 gram of kratom leaves would contain around 15 mg of alkaloids (based on the 1.5% figure), about 9 mg of which would be MG. This would suggest that a human would need to consume over 1,200 grams of kratom leaves (or extract) to obtain a reinforcing effect – equivalent to over 1,000 2-ounce doses. Although kratom leaves also contain smaller quantities of other alkaloids including 7-OH-MG, which is more potent at the mu opioid receptor, very large quantities of kratom would have to be consumed to even see the levels of withdrawal seen in rats in this study.

Suwanlert (1975) reported that the chronic exposure to *M. speciosa* preparations can be followed by withdrawal symptoms in humans. Typical withdrawal symptoms include hostility, aggression, excessive tearing, inability to work, aching of muscle or bones, and jerky limb movements. Anxiety, restlessness, tremor, sweating, and craving for M.

speciosa were some of the withdrawal symptoms caused by *M. speciosa* dependence in an elderly man with an additional history of alcohol and anxiety disorder (McWhirter and Morris, 2010). Given mitragynine affinity to μ -opioid receptors, it is tempting to speculate that dependence and withdrawal syndromes may be mediated via this pathway. Although descriptive reports suggest that *M. speciosa* users might become addicted (Suwanlert, 1975), scientific reports on the rewarding properties of the plant or its active compounds are scarce at present.

Clearly there is a need for more clinical and nonclinical research on the behavioral and physiologic effects and abuse/dependence liability of kratom. It is not completely devoid of signs that could be consistent with abuse or dependence, but neither is there evidence of high abuse/dependence potential that would support the conclusion that CSA scheduling is indicated.

3.8 Factor 8: Whether the substance is an immediate precursor of a substance already controlled under this subchapter

Neither kratom nor any of the constituents in kratom or its alkaloids are controlled substances or are precursors of a controlled substance.

4 Recommendation

After consideration of the eight factors indicative of control in the CSA, a substance must be found to meet three findings “required” for placing the substance in a particular schedule. 21 USC 812(b). These findings relate to the substance’s abuse potential, its physical or psychological dependence liability, and its accepted medical use in the United States.

4.1 Kratom’s potential for abuse is consistent with unscheduled substances

In evaluating the potential for abuse of kratom and its alkaloids, the history of consumption in Southeast Asia spanning centuries in addition to the decades of use in the U.S. reveals a pattern of volitional use with very little evidence of actual abuse. The history of use is consistent with the pharmacology of kratom and more specifically its alkaloids (MG and 7-OH MG), which produce mixed pharmacological effects that are generally mild and consistent with the stimulant-like effect of caffeine. The combination of pharmacology and pattern of actual use demonstrate that kratom’s abuse potential is consistent with that of other unscheduled substances.

Mitragynine is an indole-containing alkaloid that is structurally similar to yohimbine, the primary component of yohimbe extract, which is legally marketed in the United States as a dietary supplement. Although the pharmacology of mitragynine and 7-OH-MG are

still being studied, the most recent analysis gives significant reason to think that the pharmacology would predict low potential for abuse. In particular, analysis by Kruegel et al. (2016) shows that mitragynine is only a partial agonist of the human μ -opioid receptor, and in fact acts as an antagonist to the δ - and κ -opioid receptors. Kratom's only partial agonist activity, specificity to the human μ -opioid receptor, antagonist activity to the δ - and κ -opioid receptors, and mechanism of action are all consistent with other partial agonists that "display less respiratory depression, tolerance development, and constipation" (Kruegel et al., 2016). Indeed, an absence of reports of respiratory depression or dose escalation characterizes the observed use patterns of kratom, as detailed below. Although 7-OH-MG appears to have some stronger agonist characteristics, it is less than 2% of the crude base and "is unlikely to generally account for the psychoactive properties of this plant" (*Id.*). Nor could either MG or 7-OH-MG be extracted from kratom without sophisticated equipment and chemistry training. As a result, the pharmacology predicts a potential for abuse on par with other unscheduled substances.

The observed patterns of use in the United States confirm the prediction of the pharmacology: kratom's use patterns in the United States reflect volitional use for desired effects and are inconsistent with abuse. In assessing kratom's potential for abuse, the history of use stretching back decades in the United States, and centuries in Southeast Asia, provide ample data to establish the patterns of use of the product. That history is notable for the absence of many indicia of abuse, such as impaired control over use, compulsive use, and continued use despite harm. Federal surveys on drug abuse have not detected a significant signal regarding abuse of kratom. This reflects not only a dearth of abusive use, but also a lack of individuals seeking treatment or therapy for addiction. Reports of poisonings and deaths remain very rare and are complicated by comorbidities and exposure to other substances; remarkably, no deaths, serious adverse effects, or emergency department exposures have been reported in children. Accordingly, the patterns of use do not reflect significant actual or potential for abuse.

In contrast, kratom consumers describe mild effects characterized by alertness and mood enhancement, comparable to the effects of coffee and other caffeine containing beverages and dietary supplements. Consumers also sometimes report increased sociability, again comparable to that experienced with caffeinated beverages. Kratom consumers have not been observed to engage in intravenous, intranasal, or inhalation abuse of the substance,⁹ nor have there been significant reports of bingeing. Instead,

⁹ FDA has previously concluded a substance has a lower potential for abuse when it is only consumed orally and is not abused by "other routes of administration, either intravenously, intranasally, or by

kratom consumers commonly consume kratom as a tea or else sprinkle the substance on foods. The actual patterns of use and effects are comparable to those of other unscheduled substances, including coffee, tea, and other dietary supplements.

The assessment of a substance's potential for abuse is an inherently comparative assessment and requires consideration in the context of other comparable substances. In this regard, kratom's potential for abuse is equivalent to, or lower than, that of a variety of unscheduled substances. For example, the FDA-approved drug Contrave® contains the substance bupropion, which has been shown to have properties consistent with "feelings of euphoria and drug desirability" (Contrave Prescribing Information (PI) at § 9.2). In a section labeled "Abuse," the FDA-approved PI for Contrave states that bupropion caused agitation/excitement, "produced mild amphetamine-like activity," and scored between placebo and amphetamine on a liking scale (*Id.*). Nevertheless, FDA did not recommend scheduling bupropion – as the substance's mild characteristics of abuse potential can be sufficiently managed through regulation under the FDCA.

Likewise, FDA declined to recommend scheduling of dextromethorphan, despite multiple characteristics of a drug of abuse that appear to far exceed kratom's potential for abuse. Dextromethorphan is a substance chemically related to the opioid codeine and is used as an ingredient in many cough suppressants available as over-the-counter (OTC) drugs. In that way, dextromethorphan, like kratom, is readily available for consumer purchase. DEA has determined that dextromethorphan is associated with "[e]uphoria and hallucinations" and significant intoxicating effects, including "hyperexcitability, lethargy, ataxia, slurred speech, sweating, hypertension, and/or nystagmus" (DEA Office of Diversion Control, *Dextromethorphan*, Mar. 2014).¹⁰ According to the 2014 DEA factsheet, dextromethorphan has been the subject of 45,748 Poison Control Center case mentions, 33,811 single exposures, and six deaths. *Id.* Likewise, analysis by FDA found that although the drug was not "widely abused," it demonstrated a propensity for abuse and "intentional misuse for abusive purposes." See Briefing Package for FDA Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee,

inhalation of the smoked drug substance." FDA, *Basis for the Recommendation to Reschedule Nabilone from Schedule II to III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA)* at 10 (Sept. 11, 1998). FDA recommended rescheduling Nabilone to schedule III, despite finding "an adverse reaction profile similar to delta⁹-THC" and "delayed onset and longer duration of action of marijuana."

¹⁰ The DEA factsheet is available at https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_chem_info/dextro_m.pdf.

CONFIDENTIAL

Sept. 14, 2010.¹¹ Yet the recommendation of the Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee against scheduling,¹² and its continued absence from CSA scheduling, appears to reflect the understanding that the drug may be appropriately managed through FDCA regulation.

Nicotine is another example of a broadly marketed and used substance that meets criteria for CSA scheduling, and was determined by FDA to merit potential appropriate placement in Schedule III (e.g., Klein report of FDA analysis of CSA 8 Factors, 1994). It is present in many over the counter and prescription medicines for smoking cessation, which are used by millions of consumers in the U.S. The process of approval of a nicotine nasal spray for smoking cessation precipitated the convening of the FDA's Drug Abuse Advisory Committee and subsequently an evaluation by the Associate Commissioner for Health Affairs Dr. Stuart Nightingale and the Interagency Committee on Drug Control to consider whether or not nicotine nasal spray should be placed in the Controlled Substances Act (FDA, 1995, 1996). In brief, the Interagency Committee recommended, and FDA and NIDA concurred, that public health would be better served by not placing nicotine in the CSA.

There are many such examples of substances and products that may meet technical criteria for placement in CSA; however, the dextromethorphan and nicotine experiences are noteworthy for the deliberations in which it was clear that the more important questions were not *'could they be so placed?'* (*they clearly could*) but rather *'should they be so placed?'* In other words, was public health better served by not scheduling them, but rather ensuring surveillance and oversight and appropriate regulation under the FDCA? In these cases and many others involving prescription and over the counter medicines and dietary supplements the answer has been that public health is often better served by not scheduling substances and products that could be scheduled. In other words, public health is often best served by applying the most appropriate regulatory tools.¹³

¹¹ The package is available at <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/Drugs/DrugSafetyandRiskManagementAdvisoryCommittee/UCM224446.pdf>.

¹² See, e.g., Kerri Wachter, *FDA Panel Recommends That Dextromethorphan Not Be a Scheduled Drug*, Internal Medicine News (Sept. 14, 2010), available at <http://www.mdedge.com/internalmedicine/news/article/17801/adolescent-medicine/fda-panel-recommends-dextromethorphan-not-be>.

¹³ By disclosure and way of experience, Dr. Henningfield participated in the nicotine considerations representing NIDA and serving on Commissioner Kessler's interagency tobacco and nicotine working

Similarly, the botanical dietary supplements St. John's Wort, Valerian, and Kava Kava have not been scheduled, despite the fact that all three are known to have "reinforcing effects," act as sedatives, and have been the subject of hundreds or thousands of calls to Poison Control Centers in the past six years. Nor have guarana or kola nut been placed into a schedule under the CSA, despite the fact that both are used for increased energy and have certain characteristics of a drug of abuse. The inevitable conclusion from the decisions not to control these substances is that not every substance with characteristics potentially indicative of mild abuse potential merit scheduling, but rather that these substances can be adequately regulated through the existing authority of the FDCA.

The long history of use of kratom demonstrates a pattern of use consistent with other consumer products such as coffee and botanical dietary supplements. The history of use combined with the pharmacology of kratom lead to the conclusion that kratom has a very low potential for abuse, and that its abuse potential is on par with, or lower than, other unscheduled substances.

4.2 Kratom has a dependence liability consistent with unscheduled substances

As described in this 8-Factor Analysis, kratom overall has a low potential for abuse, dependence, and public health harm, and consideration of all 8 factors does not provide a compelling case that kratom should be placed in the CSA. The data show little tendency among kratom consumers to increase their dose to their personal detriment or to the point of addiction, as is indicative of growing dependence. Furthermore, the data demonstrate that increasing the dose of kratom is more likely to produce undesirable gastrointestinal effects, constipation, and lethargy, with little additional mood enhancement. There have been no reports in TEDS of consumers seeking treatment for dependence, nor have treatment clinics recommended monitoring such reports. These typical indicators of dependence – increased dosing and dependence treatment – are not present with kratom, which strongly suggests that its dependence potential is low or even negligible.

group, and Dr. Nightingale's committee, on the nicotine scheduling issues in 1994-1996, as well as in NIDA's recommendations against scheduling nicotine gum and patch products. Dr. Henningfield and other members of PinneyAssociates developed the 8-Factor Analysis of dextromethorphan for the Consumer Healthcare Products Association that supported its position that although dextromethorphan met criteria for scheduling, public health would be better served by more appropriate regulation, and surveillance, and efforts by product manufactures to discourage inappropriate use, and this position was supported by FDA's advisory committees and ultimately FDA itself.

Nor are observed reinforcing effects indicative of physical or psychological dependence. The reinforcing effects are described as mild and comparable to caffeinated beverages such as coffee or tea. These mild reinforcing effects are unrelated to physical dependence, and do not rise to the level of even limited psychological dependence. In addition, due to the very low bioavailability of MG and 7-OH-MG (only 3.03% bioavailable in kratom), huge quantities of kratom would need to be consumed to obtain the effects seen after taking a pure mu opioid such as morphine. The result is that kratom shows a very low dependence profile comparable to or lower than that of other unscheduled substances.¹⁴

Notably, the dependence liability finding necessary for control under CSA does not direct an analysis of dependence generally, but rather dependence liability based on “abuse” of the product. See 21 USC 812(b). As discussed above and demonstrated by this analysis, there is very little actual or potential abuse of kratom. Not only does consumer use of the product not cause dependence, but it also does not rise to abuse, which is the focus of the CSA in assessing dependence liability.

4.3 As a Matter of Law, Kratom Should Not Be Scheduled

The final finding for scheduling a drug or substance relates to its currently accepted medical use. 21 USC 812(b). The currently accepted medical use of a pharmaceutical drug is often straightforward, and FDA (or DEA) can easily establish whether a pharmaceutical drug has a currently accepted use in treatment of patients. Less clear is how this criterion may be applied to a non-pharmaceutical substance, such as a dietary supplement. A dietary supplement is a product intended to supplement the diet that contains certain types of ingredients, including botanical ingredients, and is not approved or authorized for investigation as a drug. 21 USC 321(ff). Consistent with the regulatory scheme of the FDCA, a dietary supplement is not marketed with claims of efficacy for medical use – indeed, if a dietary supplement included such claims it would likely meet the standards for regulation as a drug product under the FDCA. See 21 USC 321(g)(1), 355(a). Accordingly, as a dietary supplement, while kratom has a long history of use in the US consistent with other well-known dietary supplements, it, like all other dietary supplements and a broad range of consumer products, does not have a currently accepted medical use as that term has come to be defined under the CSA.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Memorandum from Dr. Catherine Dormitzer et al., FDA Epidemiologist, to Dr. Michael Klein, Controlled Substance Staff, regarding Abuse, Misuse, and Overdose of Dextromethorphan-Containing Products at 9 (Dec. 1, 2009) (describing 14 counts of “Drug Dependence” for dextromethorphan-containing products).

The CSA is specific in defining the three findings required to place a substance in each schedule, and except as required by international agreements and except for immediate precursors, “a drug or other substance may not be placed in any schedule unless the findings required for such schedule are made with respect to such drug or other substance.” 21 USC 812(b). Schedules II through V all require a finding that the substance has a “currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.” *Id.* In contrast, only Schedule I permits the scheduling of a drug without a currently accepted medical use, but Schedule I also requires a finding that the drug or substance has a “high potential for abuse” and a “lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.” 21 USC 812(b)(1).

As written, the CSA requires that all three findings must be made to place a substance in a schedule; therefore, a substance that does not fit all three findings for any schedule cannot be placed in any schedule. 21 USC 812(b).¹⁵ The Federal Circuit Courts of Appeals have applied this requirement. In *Americans for Safe Access v. DEA*, 706 F.3d 438, 442 (D.C. Cir. 2013), the DC Circuit stated that marijuana could not be rescheduled to Schedules III, IV, or V without a currently accepted medical use, because a currently accepted medical use is a requirement of those schedules. Likewise, in *Grinspoon v. DEA*, 828 F.2d 881 (1st Cir. 1987), the First Circuit found that all three findings are necessary before a substance maybe be scheduled. The court held that “[t]he CSA clearly provides that a substance may not be placed in Schedule I unless it lacks *both* a ‘currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States’ *and* ‘accepted safety for use... under medical supervision,’” *Grinspoon* at 887, and also found that “the CSA also requires substances identified for placement in Schedule I to have a ‘high potential for abuse,’” *id.* at 892.¹⁶

¹⁵ A federal agency is bound by the plain language of a statute if that language is unambiguous or capable of only one interpretation. “If the intent of Congress is clear, that is the end of the matter; for the court, as well as the agency, must give effect to the unambiguously expressed intent of Congress.” *Chevron v. Natural Res. Defense Council, Inc.*, 467 U.S. 837, 842-43 (1984).

¹⁶ While courts have discussed an alternative interpretation of the required findings for scheduling under the CSA, those cases have not resolved the issue as the ultimate ruling was on other grounds. See *Nat’l Org. for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) v. DEA*, 559 F.2d 735 (D.C. Cir. 1977) (considering the notion that a substance that lacks an acceptable medical use may be placed in Schedules II-V, contemplating that the findings required by the CSA function more as considerations than findings); *NORML v. DEA*, 559 F.2d at 747-48 (citing a discussion in *United States v. Maiden*, 355 F. Supp. 743, 748-49 n.4 (D. Conn. 1973), in which the district court stated that the three findings could not be “cumulative” and that a drug with no currently accepted medical use should be placed in Schedule I, “whether or not the potential for abuse is higher than for other drugs, so long as the abuse potential is not minimal.”); *NORML v. Bell*, 488 F. Supp. 123, 140 (D.D.C. 1980) (same).

CONFIDENTIAL

A plain reading of the CSA language that “a drug or other substance may not be placed in any schedule unless the findings required for such schedule are made with respect to such drug or other substance” is also consistent with the purposes of the statute. The CSA was not intended to control every substance with any indicia that may indicate a potential for abuse, regardless of the nature of the substance. Instead, Congress was focused on certain kinds of substances, with others appropriately regulated by other federal and state statutory schemes. In fact, Congress expressly stated that the CSA is to be used to control substances that “have a *substantial* and detrimental effect on the health and general welfare of the American people.” 21 USC 801(2) (emphasis added). Consistent with this approach, FDA and DEA have never scheduled consumer products with some characteristics in common with drugs of abuse, such as caffeine, herbs and other natural products, and solvents or household cleaners. Kratom, as a dietary substance, does not have an accepted medical use as that term is defined under the CSA, but it also does not have a high potential for abuse or a substantial and detrimental effect on the health or general welfare of the American people. It is another example of a substance that is outside the intended coverage of the CSA.

As reflected by the analysis of the 8 factors above demonstrating that kratom has an abuse potential and a dependence liability similar to other unscheduled substances, it is not necessary to diverge from the CSA requirement that all three findings must be made to place a substance in a schedule, because kratom’s low potential for abuse, low risk for dependence, and impact on the public health demonstrate that it is not appropriate for control under the CSA and can be appropriately regulated comparably to other unscheduled substances outside of the CSA.

4.4 As a Matter of Public Policy, Kratom Should Not Be Scheduled

There are significant costs and tenuous benefits to scheduling kratom. The decision to schedule a drug commits significant governmental resources (including personnel for enforcement) at a great cost to be ultimately borne by the public. These resources are ultimately diverted from enforcing the CSA against the illicit use of other controlled substances – substances that, when compared to kratom, pose a far greater threat to the public health. Consumers of kratom will also bear the social costs of scheduling, and the consequences of enforcement or noncompliance are likely to fall at least in equal measure on the kratom users with the longest history of use, namely, immigrant families from Southeast Asia (JEH discussions with Hmong community members in Minnesota; Axelrod and Windell, 2012, p. 56). Like other kratom consumers who have safely integrated kratom use into their daily habits with no negative consequences to health, family, or work obligations, these communities may have difficulty accepting the scheduling of a substance with a long history of safe use among community members, and scheduling may contribute to a spike in illegality and attendant social ills. If kratom is scheduled, some consumers will inevitably turn to other products, including narcotic drugs, or underground sources of kratom that are not regulated for purity, quality, or accuracy of labeling claims. See Section 3.6. Other individuals may try to continue to

use kratom despite scheduling, and ultimately end up in the criminal justice system because of the use of a product with very low risk to the individuals, their families, or their communities.

In exchange, no public health crisis is solved by scheduling kratom. As demonstrated in the analysis above, kratom use has not promoted crime or violence. It does not sap the productivity of consumers or jeopardize their health. Its effects are mild and are generally reported to involve alertness and mood enhancement, comparable to the effects of coffee. The product has low intrinsic attractiveness and has not been associated in published literature with single-substance deaths. The significant and detrimental impact of scheduling on government resources and, more importantly, consumers is not justified by kratom's effects.

Permitting kratom and its constituents to remain unscheduled does not abrogate all control over these products. Current FDA authority under the FDCA can be used to better ensure the purity and safety of the product available in the US marketplace, while scheduling under the CSA would divert resources from more critical initiatives, have a significant negative impact on kratom consumers, and do little to improve the public health. The FDCA provides FDA the authority to ensure that labeling of kratom products is not false or misleading in any particular. See 21 USC 343. This includes the requirement to accurately identify the product and any additional ingredients and to not misrepresent the MG or 7-OH-MG content of the product. FDA can also regulate misbranding of the product through claims made in labeling, including promotional advertising. Specifically, FDA retains the authority to take action against promotional claims that imply therapeutic use without sufficient supporting evidence. See 21 USC 352, 355. Nor is FDA alone in this endeavor. States may also take steps to appropriately regulate kratom, as they have done with a wide variety of other products not placed into a schedule under CSA. For example, some states have already set a minimum age to purchase or consume kratom,¹⁷ and others are studying its effects to educate citizens and guide future policy.¹⁸

¹⁷ Currently Illinois and Louisiana restrict the sale of kratom to people over the age of 18. See 720 Ill. Comp. Stat. 642/5; La. Stat. § 40:989.3. New York is considering restricting its sale to people over the age of 21, see N.Y. Assembly Bill A9121, and North Carolina is considering restricting its sale to people over the age of 18, see N.C. S.B.830.

¹⁸ AB 4431 is pending in New Jersey to restrict the sale of kratom. SB830 is pending in North Carolina and would require a study of kratom by state authorities. Neither state had taken final action on either bill at the time of writing.

5 Conclusion

We do not recommend scheduling of kratom or any of its specific alkaloids under the Controlled Substances Act. Kratom has a low potential for abuse and a low dependence liability and there is insufficient evidence of personal harm, adverse health effects or detriment to the public health to warrant control under the CSA. Effectively banning the availability of kratom through scheduling could precipitate public health problems that do not presently exist or are at very low levels, because this would shift the market place from a largely lawful retail market to illicit manufacturers and distributors with no regulated labeling, purity or content standards, or effective ability to remove adulterated products from the market. Appropriate regulation of kratom under the FDCA is the most effective way to protect the public health by ensuring appropriate access and oversight and to sustain the overall very low adverse personal and public health effects associated with kratom consumption.

6 References

- Addicott, M.A. (2014). Caffeine Use Disorder: A Review of the Evidence and Future Implications. *Current Addiction Reports* 1(3): 186-192.
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (1980). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, 3th edition (DSM-III). Arlington, VA.
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, 4th edition (DSM-IV). Arlington, VA.
- American Psychiatric Association (APA) (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, 5th edition (DSM-5). Arlington, VA.
- American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM) (2016). Definition of Addiction. Accessed from <http://www.asam.org/quality-practice/definition-of-addiction> on 17 November 2016.
- Anwar M., Law R., Schier J. (2016). Notes from the Field: Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) Exposures Reported to Poison Centers - United States, 2010-2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 65(29):748-9.
- Assanangkornchai S., Muekthong A., Sam-Angsri N., Pattanasattayawong U. (2007). The Use of *Mitragynine speciosa* ("Kratom"), an addictive plant, in Thailand. *Substance Use & Misuse* 42(14):2145-57.
- Ator N.A., Griffiths R.R. (2003). Principles of drug abuse liability assessment in laboratory animals. *Drug Alcohol Depend* 70(3 Suppl):S55-72.

Axelrod B.N., Windell J. (2012). *Dissertation Solutions: A Concise Guide to Planning, Implementing, and Surviving the Dissertation Process*. (p. 56 in E-Book version). Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Aziz, Z. (2014). Kratom: The epidemiology, use and abuse, addiction potential, and legal status. In R.B. Raffa (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 309-320). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Azizi J., Ismail S., Mordi M.N., Ramanathan S., Said M.I., Mansor S.M. (2010). In vitro and in vivo effects of three different *Mitragyna speciosa* korth leaf extracts on phase II drug metabolizing enzymes--glutathione transferases (GSTs). *Molecules* 15(1):432-41.

Backstrom B.G., Classon G., Löwenhielm P., Thelander G. (2010). Krypton—new, deadly internet drug. Since October 2009 have nine young persons died in Sweden. *Lakartidningen* 107(50):3196–3197.

Bigelow G.E., Griffiths R.R., Liebson I.A. (1977). Pharmacological influences upon human ethanol self-administration. *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology* 85B:523-38.

Borota D., Murray E., Keceli G., Chang A., Watabe J. M., Ly M., Toscano J.P., Yassa, M. A. (2014). Post-study caffeine administration enhances memory consolidation in humans. *Nature Neuroscience* 17(2):201-203.

Botanical Education Alliance (2016). Results of survey of kratom venders to estimate the number of venders, and size of the market by consumers and kratom product venders

Brunton L.L., Chabner B., Knollmann B.C. (Eds.). (2011). *Goodman & Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics* (12th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Cappelletti S., Daria P., Sani G., Aromatario M. (2015). Caffeine: Cognitive and Physical Performance Enhancer or Psychoactive Drug? *Current Neuropharmacology* 13(1):71-88.

Cone E.J., Fant R.V., Rohay J.M., Caplan Y.H., Ballina M., Reder R.F., Haddox J.D. (2003). Oxycodone involvement in drug abuse deaths. II. Evidence for toxic multiple drug-drug interactions. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 28(7):616-24.

Cone E.J., Fant R.V., Rohay J.M., Caplan Y.H., Ballina M., Reder R.F., Spyker D., Haddox J.D (2004). Oxycodone involvement in drug abuse deaths: a DAWN-based classification scheme applied to an oxycodone postmortem database containing over 1000 cases. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology*, 27(2):57-67.

CONFIDENTIAL

Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) (2010). Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the abuse potential of dextromethorphan and the public health benefits and risks of this ingredient as a cough suppressant. Briefing materials submitted to the FDA: For the Meeting of the FDA Drug Safety and Risk Management Committee, September 14, 2010 [Docket No. FDA-2010-N-0001]. Henningfield report on file.

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) (2016). Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine Background Information and Evaluation of 'Three Factor Analysis' for Temporary Scheduling. Docket No. DEA-2016-0015-0004.

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) (2015). Kratom (Mitragyna speciosa) drug profile. Accessed from <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/drug-profiles/kratom> on 15 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2010a). Guidance for Industry: Assessment of Abuse Potential of Drugs. Accessed from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/drugs/guidancecomplianceregulatoryinformation/guidances/ucm198650.pdf> on 11 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2010b). Overview of the September 14, 2010, DSaRM Advisory Committee Meeting to Discuss the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Request for an Abuse Potential Evaluation and Scheduling Recommendation for Dextromethorphan (DXM). Accessed from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/advisorycommittees/drugs/ucm224446.pdf> on 17 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (2015). Guidance for Industry: Abuse-Deterrent Opioids — Evaluation and Labeling. Accessed from <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/drugs/guidancecomplianceregulatoryinformation/guidances/ucm334743.pdf> on 17 November 2016.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (1995). Regulations restricting the sale and distribution of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products to protect children and adolescents; proposed rule analysis regarding FDA's jurisdiction over nicotine-containing cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products; notice. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration. Federal Register, 60: 41314-41792. Silver Spring, MD.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (1996). Regulations restricting the sale and distribution of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco to protect children and adolescents; final rule. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration. Federal Register, 61: 44396-45318. Silver Spring, MD.

Garrett B.E., Griffiths R.R. (2001). Intravenous nicotine and caffeine: subjective and physiological effects in cocaine abusers. Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, 296(2):486-494.

Garrett B.E., Griffiths R.R. (2001). Intravenous nicotine and caffeine: subjective and physiological effects in cocaine abusers. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 296(2):486-94.

Gauvin D.V., Carl K.L., Briscoe R.J., Vallett M., Holloway F.A. (1995). Cross-generalization between cocaine cue and two antihistamines. *European Journal of Pharmacology* 294(1):281-8.

Gavend M., Mallaret M., Dematteis M., Baragatti G. (1995). Discriminative stimulus properties of dextromethorphan in rats. *Biomedicine & Pharmacotherapy* 49(10):456-64.

Geller, A.I., Shehab, N., Weidle, N.J., Lovegrove, M.C., Wolpert, B.J., Timbo, B.B., Mozersky, R.P., Budnitz, D.S. (2015). Emergency department visits for adverse events related to dietary supplements. *New England Journal of Medicine* 373:1531-1540.

Gogineni V., Leon F., Avery B., McCurdy C.R., Cutler S. (2014). Phytochemistry of *Mitragyna speciosa*. In R.B. Raffa (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 77-94). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Goldberg S.R., Spealman R.D., Risner M.E., Henningfield J.E. (1983). Control of behavior by intravenous nicotine injections in laboratory animals. *Pharmacology Biochemistry & Behavior* 19:1011-1020.

Goldstein E.R., Ziegenfuss T., Kalman D., Kreider R., Campbell B., Wilborn C., Taylor L., Willoughby D., Stout J., Graves B.S., Wildman R., Ivy J.L., Spano M., Smith A.E., Antonio J. (2010). International society of sports nutrition position stand: caffeine and performance. *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition* 7(1):5.

Griffiths R.R., Evans S.M., Heishman S.J., Preston K.L., Sannerud C.A., Wolf B., Woodson P.P. (1990). Low-dose caffeine discrimination in humans. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*. 252(3):970-8.

Griffiths R.R., Woodson P.P. (1988). Reinforcing effects of caffeine in humans. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*. 246(1):21-9.

Gudin J.A., Mogali S., Jones J.D., Comer S.D. (2013). Risks, management, and monitoring of combination opioid, benzodiazepines, and/or alcohol use. *Postgraduate Medicine*, 125(4):115–130.

Hanson G.R., Venturelli P.J., Fleckenstein A.E. (2014). *Drugs and Society* (12th ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Harun N., Hassan Z., Navaratnam V., Mansor S.M., Shoaib M. (2015). Discriminative stimulus properties of mitragynine (kratom) in rats. *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 232(13):2227-38.

Hasin D.S., O'Brien C.P., Auriacombe M., Borges G., Bucholz K., Budney A., Compton W.M., Crowley T., Ling W., Petry N.M., Schuckit M., Grant B.F. (2013). DSM-5 criteria for substance use disorders: recommendations and rationale. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 170(8):834–851.

Hassan Z., Muzaimi M., Navaratnam V., Yusoff N.H., Suhaimi F.W., Vadivelu R., Vicknasingam B.K., Amato D., von Hörsten S., Ismail N.I., Jayabalan N., Hazim A.I., Mansor S.M., Müller C.P. (2013). From Kratom to mitragynine and its derivatives: physiological and behavioural effects related to use, abuse, and addiction. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, 37(2):138-51.

Henningfield J.E. (2015). Written summary of oral testimony for the State of Wisconsin Controlled Substances Board. Accessed from http://dsps.wi.gov/Documents/Board%20Services/Agenda%20Materials/Controlled%20Substances/2015/20150814_CSB_Additional_Material.pdf on 16 November 2016.

Henningfield J.E., Fant R.V., Buchhalter A.R., Stitzer M.L. (2005). Pharmacotherapy of nicotine dependence. *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* 55:281-299.

Henningfield J.E., Goldberg S.R. (1985). Stimulus properties of nicotine in animals and human volunteers: A review. In: Seiden L.S., Balster R.L. (Eds.), *Behavioral Pharmacology: The Current Status* (pp. 433-449). New York, Alan R. Liss.

Henningfield J.E., Smith T.T., Kleykamp B.A., Fant R.V., Donny E.C. (2016). Nicotine self-administration research: the legacy of Steven R. Goldberg and implications for regulation, health policy, and research. *Psychopharmacology* 233(23):3829–3848.

Holler J.M., Vorce S.P., McDonough-Bender P.C., Magluilo Jr. J., Solomon C.J., Levine B. (2011). Drug toxicity death involving propylhexedrine and mitragynine. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 35:54–59.

Jackson A., Stephens D.N., Duka T. (2001). A low dose alcohol drug discrimination in social drinkers: relationship with subjective effects. *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 157(4):411-20.

Janchawee B., Keawpradub N., Chittrakarn S., Prasetho S., Wararatananurak P., Sawangjareon K. (2007) A high performance liquid chromatographic method for determination of mitragynine in serum and its application to a pharmacokinetic study in rats. *Biomedical Chromatography* 21:176–183.

Kamboj A., Spiller H.A., Casavant M.J., Chounthirath T., Smith G.A. (2016). Pediatric exposure to e-cigarettes, nicotine, and tobacco products in the United States. *Pediatrics* 137(6):e20160041.

Kapp F.G., Maurer H.H., Auwarter V., Winkelmann M., Hermanns-Clausen M. (2011). Intrahepatic cholestasis following abuse of powdered kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*). *Journal of Medical Toxicology* 7:227–231.

Karinen R., Fosen J.T., Rogde S., Vindenes V. (2014). An accidental poisoning with mitragynine. *Forensic Science International* 245(32):24.

Klein M. (1994). Testimony to the Drug Abuse Advisory Committee. Meeting No. 27: Abuse Liability Assessment of Nicotine Nasal Spray, Food and Drug Administration. August 1, 1994. Proceedings Transcription (pp. 150-160). Washington, DC: SAG Corp.

Kronstrand R., Roman M., Thelander G., Eriksson A. (2011). Unintentional fatal intoxications with mitragynine and O-desmethylnaloxone from the herbal blend Krypton. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 35(4):242-247.

Kruegel A.C., Gassaway M.M., Kapoor A., Váradi A., Majumdar S., Filizola M., Javitch J.A., Sames D. (2016). Synthetic and receptor signaling explorations of the mitragynine alkaloids: Mitragynine as an atypical molecular framework for opioid receptor modulators. *Journal of the American Chemical Society* 138(21):6754-64.

Lachenmeier D.W., Sproll C., Musshoff F. (2010). Poppy seed foods and opiate drug testing—where are we today? *Therapeutic Drug Monitoring* 32(1):11-18.

Lanier R., Fant R.V., Cone E.J., Henningfield J.E. (2016). Assessment of the Abuse Potential and Benefits of Kratom and its Mitragynine Alkaloids: Implications for Regulation. Poster presented at the College on Problems of Drug Dependence 78th Annual Scientific Meeting, Palm Springs, CA.

Lelas S., Gerak L.R., France C.P. (2000). Antagonism of the discriminative stimulus effects of positive γ -aminobutyric acid(A) modulators in rhesus monkeys discriminating midazolam. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 294(3):902-908.

Macko E., Weisbach J.A., Douglas B. (1972). Some observations on the pharmacology of mitragynine. *Archives Internationales de Pharmacodynamie et de Therapie* 198:145-161.

Maruyama T., Kawamura M., Kikura-Hanajiri R., Takayama H., Goda Y. (2009). The botanical origin of kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*; Rubiaceae) available as abused drugs in the Japanese markets. *Journal of Natural Medicines* 63:340-344.

Matsumoto K., Hatori Y., Murayama T., Tashima K., Wongseripipatana S., Misawa K., Kitajima M., Takayama H., Horie S. (2006). Involvement of μ -opioid receptors in antinociception and inhibition of gastrointestinal transit induced by 7-hydroxymitragynine, isolated from Thai herbal medicine *Mitragyna speciosa*. *European Journal of Pharmacology* 549:63-70.

Matsumoto K., Horie S. (2014). Analgesic effects of mitragynine analogs. In R.B. Raffa (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 177-194). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Matsumoto K., Horie S., Ishikawa H., Takayama H., Aimi N., Ponglux D., Watanabe K. (2004). Antinociceptive effect of 7-hydroxymitragynine in mice: Discovery of an orally active opioid analgesic from the Thai medicinal herb *Mitragyna speciosa*. *Life Science* 74(17):2143-55.

Matsumoto K., Mizowaki M., Suchitra T., Takayama H., Sakai S., Aimi N., Watanabe H. (1996). Antinociceptive action of mitragynine in mice: evidence for the involvement of supraspinal opioid receptors. *Life Sciences* 59:1149–1155.

McIntyre I.M., Trochta A., Stolberg S., Campman S.C. (2015). Mitragynine 'Kratom' related fatality: a case report with postmortem concentrations. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 39:152–155.

McMahon L.R., Gerak L.R., Carter L., Ma C., Cook J.M., France C.P. (2002). Discriminative stimulus effects of benzodiazepine (bz)1 receptor-selective ligands in rhesus monkeys. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 300(2):505-512.

McWhirter L., Morris S. (2010). A case report of inpatient detoxification after kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) dependence. *European Addiction Research* 16:229-231.

Meredith S.E., Juliano L.M., Hughes J.R., Griffiths R.R. (2013). Caffeine use disorder: A comprehensive review and research agenda. *Journal of Caffeine Research* 3(3):114-130.

Moeller M.R., Hammer K., Engel O. (2004) Poppy seed consumption and toxicological analysis of blood and urine samples. *Forensic Science International* 143(2-3):183-186.

National Capital Poison Center (2016). Poison Statistics: National Data 2014. Accessed from <http://www.poison.org/poison-statistics-national> on 15 November 2016.

National Forensic Laboratory Information System (2015). 2015 Midyear Report. Accessed from https://www.nflis.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/0DesktopModules/ReportDownloads/Reports/NFLIS_MidYear2015.pdf.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (2016). The Science of Drug Abuse and Addiction: The Basics. Accessed from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/media-guide/science-drug-abuse-addiction-basics> on 17 November 2016.

Neerman M.F., Frost R.E., Deking J. (2013). A drug fatality involving Kratom. *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 58(1):1556-4029.

O'Brien C. (2011). Drug addiction. In: Brunton L.B., Chabner B.A, and Knollmann B.C. (Eds.), Goodman & Gilman's *The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics* (12th ed.) (pp. 607-629). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

O'Brien C. (1996). Drug addiction. In: Hardman J.G., Limbird L.E., Molinoff P.B., Ruddon R.W. (Eds.), Goodman & Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics (9th ed.) (pp. 557-578). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Ossiander E.M. (2014). Using textual cause-of-death data to study drug poisoning deaths. *American Journal of Epidemiology* 179(7):884-94.

Parthasarathy S., Ramanathan S., Ismail S., Adenan M.I., Mansor S.M., Murugaiyah V. (2010). Determination of mitragynine in plasma with solid-phase extraction and rapid HPLC-UV analysis, and its application to a pharmacokinetic study in rat. *Analytical and Bioanalytical Chemistry* 397(5):2023-30.

Philipp A.A., Wissenbach D.K., Weber A.A., Zapp J., Maurer H.H. (2010). Phase I and II metabolites of speciogynine, a diastereomer of the main kratom alkaloid mitragynine, identified in rat and human urine by liquid chromatography coupled to low- and high-resolution linear ion trap mass spectrometry. *Journal of Mass Spectrometry* 45:1344–1357.

Preston K.L., Wolf B., Guarino J.J., Griffiths R.R. (1992). Subjective and behavioral effects of diphenhydramine, lorazepam and methocarbamol: evaluation of abuse liability. *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics* 262(2):707-20.

Prozialeck W.C., Jivan J.K., Andurkar S.V. (2012). Pharmacology of kratom: an emerging botanical agent with stimulant, analgesic and opioid-like effects. *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association* 112:792–799.

Raffa R. (Ed.). (2015). *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Ramanathan S., Mansor S.M. (2015). Toxicology of mitragynine and analogs. In: Raffa R. (Ed.), *Kratom and Other Mitragynines: The Chemistry and Pharmacology of Opioids from a Non-Opium Source* (pp. 281-296). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Reissig C.J., Carter L.P., Johnson M.W., Mintzer M.Z., Klinedinst M.A., Griffiths R.R. (2012). High doses of dextromethorphan, an NMDA antagonist, produce effects similar to classic hallucinogens. *Psychopharmacology (Berl)* 223(1):1-15.

Rosenbaum C.D., Carreiro S.P., Babu K.M. (2012). Here today, gone tomorrow...and back again? A review of herbal marijuana alternatives (K2, spice), synthetic cathinones (bath salts), kratom, *Salvia divinorum*, methoxetamine, and piperazines. *Journal of Medical Toxicology* 8:15–32.

Rudd R.A., Aleshire N., Zibbell J.E., Gladden R.M. (2016). Increases in drug and opioid overdose deaths — United States, 2000–2014. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 64(50):1378-82.

Sabetghadam A., Ramanathan S., Sasidharan S., Mansor S.M. (2013). Subchronic exposure to mitragynine, the principal alkaloid of *Mitragyna speciosa*, in rats. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 146(3):815-23.

Schnoll S.H., Henningfield J.E. FDA incentivizing Pharma to develop less abusable pain medicines. National Pain Report, Alternative Pain Therapy, Government. August 5, 2016. Accessed from <http://nationalpainreport.com/fda-incentivizing-pharma-to-develop-less-abusable-pain-medicines-8831082.html> on 17 November 2016.

Schuster C.R., Henningfield J. (2003). Conference on abuse liability assessment of CNS drugs. *Drug Alcohol Depend* 70(3 Suppl):S1-4.

Scott T.M., Yeakel J.K., Logan B.K. (2014). Identification of mitragynine and O-desmethylnaloxone in kratom and legal high products sold online. *Drug Testing and Analysis* 6:959–963.

Shamima A.R., Fakurazi S., Hidayat M.T., Hairuszah I., Moklas M.A., Arulselvan P. (2012). Antinociceptive action of isolated mitragynine from *Mitragyna speciosa* through activation of opioid receptor system. *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* 13:11427–11442.

Singh D., Müller C.P., Vicknasigam B.K. (2014). Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) dependence, withdrawal symptoms and craving in regular users. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 139:132-137.

Sufka K.J., Loria M.J., Lewellyn K., Zjawiony J.K., Ali Z., Abe N., Khan I.A. (2014). The effect of *Salvia divinorum* and *Mitragyna speciosa* extracts, fraction and major constituents on place aversion and place preference in rats. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 151(1):361-4.

Suwanlert S. (1975). Study of kratom eaters in Thailand. *Bulletin on Narcotics* 27:21-27.

Swogger M.T., Hart E., Erowid F., Erowid E., Trabold N., Yee K., Parkhurst K.A., Priddy B.M., Walsh Z. (2015). Experiences of kratom users: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 47(5):360-367.

Takayama H. (2004). Chemistry and pharmacology of analgesic indole alkaloids from the rubiaceous plant, *Mitragyna speciosa*. *Chemical and Pharmaceutical Bulletin* (Tokyo) 52:916–928.

Takayama H., Ishikawa H., Kurihara M., Kitajima M., Aimi N., Ponglux D., Koyama F., Matsumoto K., Moriyama T., Yamamoto L.T., Watanabe K., Murayama T., Horie S. (2002). Studies on the synthesis and opioid agonistic activities of mitragynine-related indole alkaloids: Discovery of opioid agonists structurally different from other opioid ligands. *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* 45:1949–1956.

Tanguay P. (2011). Kratom in Thailand: Decriminalisation and community control. Accessed from <https://www.tni.org/files/download/kratom-briefing-dlr13.pdf> on 31 July 2015.

Thevis M., Opfermann G., Schänzer W. (2003). Urinary concentrations of morphine and codeine after consumption of poppy seeds. *Journal of Analytical Toxicology* 27(1):53-56.

Trakulsrichai S., Sathirakul K., Auparakkitanon S., Krongvorakul J., Sueajai J., Noumjad N., Sukasem C., Wananukul W. (2015). Pharmacokinetics of mitragynine in man. *Drug Design, Development and Therapy* 9:2421-2429.

U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) (2014). Can Poppy Seeds Cause A Positive Drug Test? Accessed from <http://www.usada.org/can-poppyseeds-cause-a-positive-drug-test/> on 22 November 2016.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) (2010). How tobacco smoke causes disease: The biology and behavioral basis for smoking-attributable disease: A report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.

Ward J., Rosenbaum C., Hernon C., McCurdy C.R., Boyer E.W. (2011). Herbal medicines for the management of opioid addiction: safe and effective alternatives to conventional pharmacotherapy? *CNS Drugs*, 25(12):999-1007.

Warner M.L., Kaufman N.C., Grundmann O. (2016). The pharmacology and toxicology of kratom: from traditional herb to drug of abuse. *International Journal of Legal Medicine* 130(1):127-38.

Yusoff N.H., Suhaimi F.W., Vadivelu R.K., Hassan Z., Rümmler A., Rotter A., Amato D., Dringenberg H.C., Mansor S.M., Navaratnam V., Müller C.P. (2016). Abuse potential and adverse cognitive effects of mitragynine (kratom). *Addiction Biology* 21(1):98-110.

Attachment A: Testimonies of Kratom Consumers

This document contains the testimonies of responsible kratom users, as compiled by the American Kratom Association between September 19th and September 21st, 2016

My name's [REDACTED], I'm 32 years old and I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis and Degenerative Disc Disease. For the past ten years I have undergone exhausting physical therapy sessions and counseling to deal with this illness and pain. Over the years my tolerance to opioid prescriptions has climbed and I made the decision, with the help of my doctors, to lower my doses as much as possible. In Spring 2016, a family member asked me if I had tried an herbal supplement called Kratom. I decided to give it a try as I was at a point where I'd be willing to try almost anything to get rid of the pain. After a week I noticed my energy levels were back to where they were four or five years ago, and in six weeks my pain had subsided enough to let me work 8 hours a day up from only two or three before. Kratom has helped me to become a productive member of society again.

My Name is [REDACTED]. I am a 39 yr-old PR & marketing consultant. I have never been arrested. I have never been "into drugs". I am a business owner & productive member of society. I graduated magna cum laude from my university. I speak three languages fluently. I am the furthest thing from a "felon" or a "junkie", yet I have suffered from depression and suicidal thoughts since adolescence. At one point I was on three different antidepressants. I felt like a ZOMBIE. I became listless, tired all of the time. A shell of a person. I have been taking Kratom for the past year and I can tell you without a doubt that the United States & the world gets way more out of me as a member of society in terms of productivity, positivity & contribution than if I had not discovered this incredible herb. I take very small amounts every day. Since I started taking it, I frequently go days at a time without it, and I do not suffer any withdrawals, but yes, the depression does come back. But the feeling is NOT like an "addiction" feeling (I've tried to quit coffee, I know what addiction feels like). It's more like my symptoms of depression come back within a few days. If the DEA bans this substance, honest, hard-working people who are MUCH more productive members of society thanks to Kratom will be unjustly turned into felons, just because they want a better life for themselves and the people around them. So if this passes, you then leave people like us with three choices: 1) suicidal depression 2) zombie listlessness on prescriptions meds that don't work for us or 3) become a felon because we responsibly use a safe herb that is an incredible quality-of-life enhancer. If anybody in the DEA uses any sort of prescription drugs for any physical or mental ailment, I would like them to look in the mirror and ask themselves: how would you feel if by tomorrow you were considered a "felon" for taking that prescription? Feels unjust doesn't it? More than that, it feels like a huge step back for society as a whole. I understand there are people out there who overdose on everything. There are people overdosing on paint thinner & "whipits" from whipped cream cans, for crying out loud! But those of us using Kratom responsibly deserve to have access to a safe herb that helps our quality of life like NO other supplement or medication does. For us, for this country, for society, and for people productively contributing to this economy...Please keep Kratom legal.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 35 year old (returning) nursing student that has been married for ten years with two kids under the age of 15. I have MS and degenerative disc disease.(Black Disk disease to be specific) While being treated for my disc degeneration, I was prescribed massive amounts of painkillers. This line of treatment made it impossible for me to care for my daughter (who was three at the time), and my blind veteran father. I will never forget the conversation with my doctor; he told me I had no choice in treatment options and that horrid unresponsive state was my new reality. To quote him "You need to have a conversation with God if you want to get better." Then, by chance, I found Kratom. Once I started using this miraculous plant, I was able to come off the painkillers completely. I have since been diagnosed with MS and carpal tunnel syndrome. I have not missed a single day of work other than maternity leave because of the properties of kratom. During my maternity leave and for several days of testing a year, I intentionally miss my daily doses. The pain is excruciating. I can barely walk, the depression and anxiety

CONFIDENTIAL

that has come because of the MS is so fierce I am almost mentally paralyzed. To be sentenced back to that almost comatose state would be a fate akin to death. I am who I am, a mother, student, wife, daughter, money earning member of society, because of kratom.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 44 year old female and up until March 2013 was employed as a federal police officer with the Federal Bureau of Investigation for 23 years. In 1996, I was diagnosed with systemic lupus and fibromyalgia, two chronic, life-long illnesses for which there is no cure. Lupus causes severe pain, stiffness, swelling, tenderness and warmth in your joints. Fibromyalgia symptoms are: deep muscle pain causes painful tender points, morning stiffness, sleep problems, fatigue and anxiety. For twenty years I have suffered daily with severe pain throughout my joints and muscles. In the fall of 2014, after being on eleven medications (prednisone, Flexeril, Zanaflex, Nucynta, Lyrica, triamcinolone, Lortab, gabapentin, synthroid, Tramadol, and nortriptyline) that really didn't help and prescribed to me by my rheumatologist and pain management doctors, I started to suffer serious side effects (blurry vision, short term memory problems, dizziness, headaches, weight gain, and leg cramps) from the combination of the medications. At this point in my life, I decided to taper down off of all prescribed medications. Shortly thereafter, and still suffering from severe joint pain, a friend suggested that I try kratom. I immediately researched and learned as much as I could about it. After a month long quest to learn as much as I could, I finally got up the nerve to try it. That was the day that I got my life back prior to being sick. The joint pain was gone. I felt like a new person. I am a wife, sister, friend, aunt, and best of all, a mother to my twelve year old daughter again.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 57 years old, I have been married for 36 years. I am the mother of three sons and grandmother of 3 beautiful granddaughters. I earned a college degree while working a full time job and raising our children. I have worked for the same company for over 35 years and currently hold the position of Senior Production Planner. I go to church every Sunday and I am a member of the choir. I am in good physical condition but have had arthritis in my knees for several years that I have treated with ibuprofen, Meloxicam, Tramadol for flare ups, and cortisone injections 2-3 times a year. A little over a year ago a family member suggested that I try kratom and I was amazed at how well it controls my pain without making me feel drugged - just completely normal and pain free! Since I started taking kratom I have stopped taking both ibuprofen and Tramadol, and have only had one cortisone injection in the last year.

My 59 year old husband retired in 2008 with 30 years of law enforcement at the rank of lieutenant. He was injured on duty in 1991 and as a result has had two fusion surgeries on his back. He has been in constant pain since then but has always resisted taking prescription pain medication because he does not like the way they make him feel. Since taking kratom he is also feeling and functioning much better now, working two part time jobs and is happy to be able to be productive with reduced pain.

I really can't say enough about this wonderful plant. I am now exercising regularly and I am about 15 pounds lighter than I was a year ago. I can now sit at my desk and work all day without hurting, and come home at the end of the day and take walks and play with my granddaughters instead of falling into my recliner until bedtime. I can work in my yard on the weekends and not be a burden to my children. I am much more active now than I was before taking kratom.

I know that our quality of life as productive members of society will not be the same without kratom. We have been hard working, tax-paying, law abiding citizens our whole lives and now the DEA wants to deprive us of the best option that we have found to treat our pain!

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I'm a 36 year old, father of two with one on the way. I am the sole provider for my family. I take Kratom to help with the pain and spasms associated with crohn's disease. It's helped me tremendously with managing the pain and some of the other symptoms that I have to deal with. I've been taking it for about 6 months now. It's a great alternative to the percocet prescribed by my

CONFIDENTIAL

Doctor. No ill effects from the Kratom and no dependency. I only have positive things to say about it. Pain pills make me tired, depressed and they take me out of focus and they make you dependant. None of this is true about Kratom. I can now manage the symptoms associated with crohn's without the side effects of prescription medications. Prior to Kratom, I haven't had a solid stool in years, I didn't know I had crohn's until it got real bad and I had to have surgery to have a large section of my colon removed. Kratom has changed all that. A solid stool may not sound like something to get excited about, but to me, it means my gut is getting better! I think anyone dealing with this disease would want to know about it.

██████████ ██████████
██████████ FL

I am a 45 year old business owner who has been using kratom for 8 years. In 2001 I was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation and prescribed a plethora of pills in an effort to control it. I struggled with the side effects of those medications and the anxiety of dealing with a cardiac ailment that could cause problems in a moment's notice...there were many trips to the ER over the years. It affected my personal life as well as my professional life in the worst ways imaginable. Since using kratom regularly, I have not had a single issue with my heart rhythm. And best of all, not a single trip to the ER. I have no more of the negative side effects I experienced with drugs like beta blockers, digoxin and blood thinners. I am no longer terrified of leaving the house, no longer afraid of passing out (my blood pressure was dangerously low on betapace). I have a greater quality of life now more than I did. I am healthier, happier, more productive, and this plant has saved my life as far as I am concerned.

I am a law abiding citizen with zero criminal record, I volunteer my time and efforts to help others and kratom has given me a new lease on life. It also helps with intestinal inflammation that I struggled with, and anxiety - which is a big part of atrial fibrillation. Those are bonuses from using this plant regularly. I do NOT use this plant recreationally and I can guarantee you that I get more of a 'high' from cold medication at normal doses than I get from kratom. Banning this plant will take me back to square one: dealing with powerful, dangerous meds like digoxin and struggling to manage the dangerous side effects from the other meds that I will likely have to begin taking again. Please do not sentence me to have to deal with that struggle again. I solved it! Kratom allowed me to have my life again. Not being able to use it will literally be like turning the clock back on my health.

I am 38 years old, and I take kratom to help me manage depression, anxiety and menstrual cramps. I have tried Rx and OTC drugs, but the Rx's have horrific side effects and are not nearly as effective as kratom. The OTC meds also sometimes do not really reduce the pain I feel from cramps. Sometimes I feel so unwell I have to call off work. I do not like having to call off work. If this ban goes through, I know that my depression and anxiety will be so powerful and this is so scary. I see myself becoming weighed down with depression and anxiety and having to be in horrible pain once a month for cramps. It will be much more difficult to work each day, and I am sure I will have many more sick days if this ban goes through, maybe even having my job put at risk. I have an advanced degree with a professional job. I also see the quality of my life plummeting even outside of work. When I am depressed, anxious, or in pain, I don't want to go out, run errands, and I lose interest in hobbies, exercise, etc. Kratom helps me take on the day, so to speak. I have been using it for about 6 years and have found it to have such a positive effects on my physical and mental health. -██████████, ██████████ ██████████, CA

My name is ██████████. I am now 44 but started taking Kratom at age 39 to help ease my debilitating headaches after working as a nurse. I suffered a brain injury. I found that not only did the herbal supplement help my headaches, it helped with my cognitive impairment as well. I injured my back during the initial fall and multiple times during seizures. Kratom helps ease that pain as well. If the Kratom ban goes through I would be forced to rely on opiates for my pain control and be faced with the very certainty

CONFIDENTIAL

of becoming dependent on these medications. It's bad enough that my career and driving ability was ripped away from me. Now I just fall into an even deeper depression over the little choices I have, also being taken away. Before I found Kratom I had attempted suicide 4 times, but haven't thought of it since. Thank you for hearing my story, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED] California

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 49 years old, I am a dad of four, married, a teacher and an ordained pastor with a Masters of Divinity from [REDACTED] Seminary. I graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in 1989, and with Honors from [REDACTED] Seminary in 2001. I've been teaching and preaching since 1989.

I also have used kratom for the past 3 years. I had a bad accident that damaged both my skull/brain, spine and my pelvis about 15 years ago--I fell on the ice outside my home. As a result of the TBI and spinal cord injury, plus the pelvic damage, I was in terrible pain and prescribed opioids which gave me horrible side effects. I was also diagnosed with fibromyalgia and got sleep apnea through all this. I was no longer able to work as a full time pastor or substitute teach anymore as I had been. After finding a doctor who was able to help me, I started using kratom for the remaining pain that was not alleviated by therapy, and also used it as a direct means to get me off ALL the opioid medications the other doctors had prescribed. In one year I was back both in my pulpit, and now am finishing up my Masters in Special Education. I would not be teaching and working without having access to kratom.

Bottom line: Do my degrees and graduating with honors mean a thing if I can't go to work? Does having a family, a spouse who loves me and a home mean a thing if you can't enjoy it? I went back to coaching my son's baseball team. That wouldn't have happened without the kratom. I teach. I preach. I'm active. It's from being well for the first time in years that I am able to be a productive part of society.

Sincerely,
Reverend [REDACTED] [REDACTED], B.A., M.Div.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 48 years old, married with two grown children. I work in the mental health field and I have for almost 30 years. For many years I have had trouble with degenerative disk disease, arthritis and spinal stenosis. I took multiple analgesics for many years. I do not like the way that narcotics make me feel. I did a lot of reading trying to find alternatives. I became very ill 2 years ago and was diagnosed with multiple autoimmune illnesses. I have Lupus, Sjogren's Syndrome and celiac disease. The fatigue and body aches from autoimmune can only be understood by someone else with the disease. I had never found a way out of pain with prescription medications. I kept reading. There was a time when I took almost 30 pills a day between prescription medications, vitamins and supplements. I felt ridiculous taking these handfuls of pills. I went to doctor's appointments all the time. They were at a loss and I could tell that they were tired of me. I kept reading. I found out about kratom from another person with autoimmune. I tried it and have not looked back. All I have wanted for these past several years is to participate in life and function normally. This is the first time in many years that I have functioned like a normal person. I have not taken any of those prescriptions for months. I have also not cancelled any plans, haven't missed any work and haven't slept around the clock. I have never been high from kratom. I am not sure how I would even do that - never tried! I found a minimal dose to live my life and I have never been happier. I love life. I love my family, my dogs, my job, my friends and my community. I refuse to be a criminal so I don't know what I will do if I can no longer have kratom, I have not really thought about it because it seems so unreal to me. Please help us. Please don't ban kratom.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 35 years old and married with two teenage boys. I have suffered from social anxiety, severe depression, and chronic pain for fifteen years. I've been prescribed many different types of medications for those disorders. All of the medications I've tried always caused me more problems than they solved. On prescription medications I was unable to work, and I couldn't take care of my family. Two years ago I found kratom. I've been taking kratom, one to two teaspoons in morning and at night when needed for two years. I am able to have quality relationships with my wife children and actually have

CONFIDENTIAL

friends now. My social anxiety would not allow that before. I am more balanced and put together than I've ever been. I have been working in the same job now for two years, and was recently promoted. My life was a terrible mess when I had to use Pharmaceuticals. I don't want to go back to that mess. Please don't ban kratom.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 35 years old. I found kratom 9 years ago and it saved me from a terrible addiction to opiate pain pills. I have many issues including insomnia, anxiety, depression, scoliosis, two slipped discs in my back, and a bad hip. Because of kratom I don't need any prescriptions. It helps me with all my ailments. I'm afraid of what will happen to me if kratom becomes a schedule 1. I will be forced back into my addiction with pills. This is life or death for me. Kratom is a miracle plant for me where no pill ever helped the way Kratom does. It's safe and effective with no side effects. Save our beloved plant.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am only 32, and already medically retired from the Army. I take kratom for PTSD and OCD, after my doctor mentioned it. Before kratom, I was on over 17 different medications. All made my life worse. Caused me to become pre-diabetic, zoned out, worse mood swings, and didn't come close to touching anxiety enough to allow me to go to therapy. Now, with kratom, I am able to hold down a job as a veterinarian technician, and am able to be a part of my family. I can now make it to my daughter's recitals and games without being nervous or on edge. I can even talk in therapy without my anger and anxiety getting in the way. If kratom is taken from me, I will be taken away from my family. Either by the law taking me away because I refuse to stop taking kratom, or by death.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 53-year-old mother of three and grandmother to one with one on the way! Before Kratom I was riddled with pain, had become reclusive, and didn't see much of a future. I was depressed, drugged and miserable having to endure the amount of pain I was in. Pain medications made my existence lonely and dependant. It just didn't seem like life was worth living with so much pain until a medical professional friend of mine suggested I try Kratom. Since taking Kratom, I no longer need pain medications (such as Percocet, Dilaudid, and tramadol), anti-anxiety medications, and anti-depression medications!! ALL GONE! My life has turned completely around and I feel alive again. I now feel I have a future to look forward to and can be the wife, mother, and grandmother I've always wanted to be. Kratom has taken away my pain, my anxiety and the depression resulting from so much pain. I have my life back! I'm healthy, clear headed, happy, and look forward to my future again! When I'm asked what will I do if the DEA succeeds? I can honestly say that I have only two choices to consider; continue taking Kratom illegally, or I go back on narcotics in full time pain management thereby ruining my life and the lives around me! THERE IS NO OPTION here! I don't want to die but I don't want a life on narcotics either!

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I am a responsible 50 year old man and use kratom every evening to treat my restless leg syndrome. I have been using Kratom for 2 years. Prior to using Kratom, I treated my RLS with Oxycodone and Tramadol. After 4 years I became tolerant and addicted to the oxycodone and Tramadol. Those medications were hurting me, not helping me. I found kratom online and used it to detox. It took away 90 percent of my withdrawals. I continued to use it every night for the last 2 years and it eliminates this horrible condition. If kratom is made illegal, I will die on the oxycodone again. Please don't make me go down that dark road again. I am happy and productive again and have no ill side effects from kratom. It has proven very safe and effective for me when all the other medications failed me. [REDACTED].

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a 40 year old mother of 6. I was diagnosed with lupus, Sjögren's syndrome, fibromyalgia, hypothyroidism and chronic fatigue shortly after my twins were born in 2010. I spent 2 years trying medication after medication, looking for relief. The drugs I was put on caused a 70 pound weight gain in 2 months. The steroids made me blow up like a balloon. One of the medications was causing me to go blind. I couldn't lift my babies most days without crying out in pain. The fatigue kept me from playing and having fun with my children. I would lay in the floor and just cry some days because I was so miserable. I found out about kratom on a chronic pain forum and started researching. Within two months of trying it, I was weaning off the medications that were making me miserable. I was playing with my kids. I was cooking and cleaning and being the wife my husband deserved. My husband suffers from terrible disc degeneration. He is a mechanic and has to bend and twist all day long at his job. He tried kratom and he is now able to work through the day with minimal pain. Kratom has changed our lives and made us better parents. We aren't quite sure what we are going to do without it. - [REDACTED] Texas

I am a 42 year old self-employed businessman. I have never been addicted to drugs or alcohol. I have however, suffered from anxiety and a herniated disc between my L4-L5 lumbar vertebrae. For years I had been taking prescribed Lexapro for my anxiety. When I started consuming Kratom, I was able to quit taking Lexapro. It was more effective and had no side effects. The biggest thing in which Kratom helped me with was my back. I was scheduled to have a microdiscectomy 1.5 years ago when I re-injured my disc. The pain I was experiencing was excruciating. I was prescribed high power pain killers which had horrible side effects, such as extreme fatigue, mental cloudiness, and upset my stomach. I decided to try Kratom instead and it was a miracle. The pain was severely reduced and there were no ill side effects. I was able to take Kratom in my work day and stay focused mentally without feeling tired. Because of Kratom I was able to take my doctor's advice and wait 4 month to see if the herniation would heal itself enough to avoid surgery...and because of Kratom, I was able to do exactly that! Keep Kratom Legal! - [REDACTED] FL

I am a responsible adult working as a General Manager at a restaurant, work 70+ hours a week and at the same company for 7 years and have been a part of the top 10% of my company for 2 of those years. I am a responsible user of Kratom, I use it for an energy boost for my long work shifts, as well as depression issues, and back pain. My life would be detrimental without it. I feel that if I am able to drink caffeine, alcohol, or smoke cigarettes, all of which are far more detrimental to my health and kill millions of people a year, I should be able to use this tea in my daily life without question. I feel the DEA has overstepped their bounds, and we should have checks and balances in place for them. They shouldn't be able to make federal laws without going through the public, or the other branches of government first. Not to mention this is a perfect way to start a black market for this product which would increase crime. Canada, Mexico, and the origin countries of this plant are all legal, which means easy entrance to the USA. I am not a criminal or an irresponsible drug addict, I am a hardworking American who takes care of his family any way possible. Please sign on to the letter, there will be millions of people suffering because of this. [REDACTED] Tx

I came to use kratom because I needed something that helped me focus on my schoolwork as well as help me reduce stress and relax on a daily basis. Kratom allows me to be more effective at school and I continue be more relaxed as I use kratom. Nothing else has been effective in my life to reduce stress or other anxiety issues without being on prescription medication. I prefer kratom because it is simple and doesn't have any negative effects on people. Kratom is safer than pharmaceutical drugs, with important medicinal uses and has changed my life. [REDACTED] NC

CONFIDENTIAL

I am the mother of an incredible young woman who recently found Kratom and has been so much improved thanks to this wonderful plant. My daughter has been chronically ill since she was in elementary school. She was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis at that time. Since then, she's had many years of suffering through multiple surgeries and the side effects of having an autoimmune disease. To make matters worse, she has a permanent ileostomy, and eventually developed diabetes and arthritis. In spite of her illnesses, through the years she somehow managed to fight for a "normal life" with a husband and two beautiful children. But every year, the battle gets harder and she gets more tired and discouraged. For the last few years, the only thing that has kept her going was an Rx narcotic, but with the "war on prescription drugs" raging, she was one of the people who truly needed her meds, but was forced by the "pain management center" to be taken off the med that kept her functioning in the world. In desperation, she searched the internet for something that could help and found Kratom. She got immediate relief from pain, stress and insomnia by using this tea only a few times weekly. Just when things finally were looking up and she was able to get out of bed, cook for her family, go to her kid's school activities, etc., the DEA announces that they are going to put this TEA on the same list as dangerous drugs! I'm begging the reconsideration of the decision. Since hearing about Kratom (I was very skeptical) I have learned about many other people who are getting their lives back from chronic pain, insomnia, depression and many other terrible ailments without having to use narcotics or dangerous drugs. This is a miracle for many Americans, please, don't take it away.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED], Kentucky

I am a 36 year old male with a degree in Marine Biology that suffers from OCD, Depression, and ADD. I currently work as a lumber associate and thanks to Mitragyna, I am able to get through many painful days due to my conditions. I absolutely am for educating the public.

[REDACTED], [REDACTED], FL

I am a mother that suffered from fibromyalgia and lupus but now that I found Kratom I am free of my pain and I could live a happy life.

[REDACTED], TX

I am a 37 year old female and have dealt with severe social anxiety for all my life. After numerous highly addictive anxiety medication prescriptions, that did me far more harm than good, I researched herbal remedies for anxiety and came across Kratom. Kratom has saved me from a life controlled by severe anxiety that was so bad that at times I could not leave my house, work, or even drive. I am now a productive member of society. I am not an addict. I do not get "high." I do not even drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes. If this ban goes through, my life will return to a living hell.

I am a 57 year old male diagnosed with clinical depression and PTSD. Since discovering kratom 2 years ago, an occasional cup of kratom tea, approximately six times a week has dramatically reduced the anxiety/panic attacks associated with my PTSD. My doctor was very supportive. Because of kratom, I no longer have to take Xanax every four hours to keep the attacks at bay. The kratom also eliminated any withdrawal symptoms associated with the cessation of the Xanax. Furthermore, I find that I can go for several days to a week between consuming my kratom tea with no cravings. Truly a remarkable plant.

I have been on prescription pain meds for 15 years with little relief. I have fibromyalgia, lupus, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, degenerative disc disease, and mixed connective tissue disease. I have suffered for years in pain and am currently on permanent disability at age 46. Within 2 days of

CONFIDENTIAL

starting kratom (mostly red strains) I had no pain. I have not been pain free in 30 years! Kratom is my miracle.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, NE

I'm 63 years old, a writer and retiree. I first learned about kratom online as I was searching for a legal alternative for chronic arthritis pain. My MD wouldn't prescribe the narcotic Vicodin even though I'd taken this medication for more than three years with no ill effect. The kratom I now use is called red vein Bali in capsule form. It doesn't make me "loopy" and has a mild stimulant effect like a good strong cup of coffee. What's more, my arthritis pain is hardly noticeable. I often go up stairs without having to hang on. With some changes in my diet I've lost about thirty pounds and while I wouldn't say kratom is an appetite suppressant it does seem to help me a little bit in that way. Like anything else it needs to be treated with respect and the potential for abuse is pretty small compared to a lot of other things.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, CA

am 50 years old and suffer with chronic Lyme disease. Before I started using kratom I wasn't able to hardly get out of bed. Kratom has given me the ability to live my life again. If it gets banned I don't know what I will do. I don't want to be on prescription drugs the rest of my life.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, VA

I am a 48 yr old female who uses Kratom for severe menstrual cramps and PMS, and occasional back and neck pain. It works better than anything else. I have been prescribed opiates and they don't work and they make you feel fuzzy. I have been using it as needed for several years, I feel no addiction to it, coffee is more addicting. It's safe and it works. Kratom makes me functional and productive on days where with the pain, I would be non-functional and miserable.

I am a 45 yr old female from NC, who has been using Kratom responsibly for several years for severe depression & anxiety. I was finally able to stop taking my antidepressants, which were causing me ill side effects. - ■■■■■ ■■■■■.

I am a 36 year old female (mother of 4 and grandmother to 1) who has been responsibly using Kratom for 2 years. I use it for fibromyalgia, anxiety, acute gastritis, IBS and immunity. I take ½ teaspoon once a day, sometimes twice if it's really necessary. I've never upped my dose and I take regular breaks (one week a month and sometimes an entire month at a time) without experiencing withdrawal symptoms. My fibro is manageable, my anxiety, most of the time is under control, my acute gastritis attacks are basically null. I used to have these very painful attacks as often as several times a week or as little as once every couple months. Six ER visits in 20 years for attacks that were so severe, I feared something was horribly wrong. I've had only one gastritis attack in the last two years. I haven't been sick with so much as a cold in the last two years. The ONLY prescription I have is for ½ mg of Ativan for an emergency panic attack, and I might take that once every 3 or 4 months. The only side effects I experience with kratom are nausea if I take kratom on an empty stomach and don't eat within an hour, and constipation if I don't drink enough water. My biggest fear without kratom is going back to the painful digestive issues, and having to rely more on prescriptions to control my anxiety. I will never take a script for my fibro. I will also go back to spending less time out and about with my husband and children as kratom has helped me to the point where I can get back into the swing of things and not worry about the pain I might be in if I do this, or the anxiety I'll have if I do that. - ■■■■■ ■■■■■ PA.

I am a 33 year old female who has been using Kratom for approximately 2 years now. I have severe, chronic back pain that 12 doctors and specialists have been unable to diagnose. Through those 12

CONFIDENTIAL

doctors, I have been prescribed every painkiller and muscle relaxant out there. None of them worked for too long, as I developed tolerances and the doctors would not alter the Rx. That sent me into awful withdrawal episodes that could last weeks. A friend recommended Kratom as a way to deal with the withdrawals. Not only did they help with that, but it completely ridded me of the back pain all those doctors can't figure out. I honestly cannot get out of bed and be a taxpaying, working member of society without Kratom.

■■■■■ ■■■■■, MO

I am a 31-year-old graduate student, freelance writer, and psychotherapist. I've lived with chronic myofascial pain since I was 19. For the last four years, I have suffered from a severe and intractable iliopsoas spasm; when it flares up, it's so bad that I've cried myself to sleep and woken up screaming in pain. I used to be on a variety of prescription medications, none of which fully helped and nearly all of which interfered with my daily functioning. Almost five years ago, I began using kratom. Within months, I had phased out almost all prescription drugs. My pain management provider has marveled at the fact that I almost never need to take narcotic pain meds. In addition, kratom has helped me with depression and anxiety, as well as with seasonal allergies. Without kratom, I will almost certainly have to go back on prescription drugs. The quality of life that kratom has afforded me is immeasurable.

-■■■■■ ■■■■■, Massachusetts

I am a 41 year old mother of 4 children. I have suffered from pain for 18 years. My pain is so severe that I feel like I am getting stabbed over and over again. A pain so intense that I feel like I am dying. I have endometriosis, arthritis and chronic kidney stones. I pass a stone once a month. Two years ago I found kratom and my life has changed forever. I am now able to function, I can now work, cook, clean and care for my 10 year old that suffers from type 1 diabetes. I am no longer bedridden, I am now happy. If kratom is banned, I fear for my future. A future of pain. I can not go back to that life of pain, I just can not. My life will be ruined if the ban goes through. -■■■■■ ■■■■■ Colorado

I am a 28 year old female that has been taking Kratom for going on 7 years. I suffered with horrible depression after the loss of my son ■■■■■, back pain, and recently found out I have Hidradenitis Skin Disease - for which there is no cure. My pain levels were so bad some days, I was unable to get out of bed. Now that I have found and take Kratom my depression is completely gone and my pain is under control. I am a Mom of 3 children and Kratom helps me be able to do all the normal everyday things! Kratom has gave me my life back and helps make each day easier. -■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■, SC

I am housebound and mostly bedbound due to illness. I am immunocompromised and battling 12 systemic infections and have CFS. Kratom gives me a quality of life. I found Kratom while desperately seeking pain control in 2014. At the time I could not walk, I was 95lbs, and had no insurance. I began taking Kratom for pain that later had me in the hospital for 6 days. Once I got into a doctor, I was prescribed hydrocodone, tramadol, flexeril, oxycodone, dicyclomine, and buspar for pain and anxiety. I took these drugs for several months but the side effects were intense. I began to have rebound pain from the opiates and had to wean off. I used kratom to get through the physical withdrawal and then dropped those other medications as well. I have been using Kratom to control my pain ever since. -■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■, KS

I am a 44 year old mother and homemaker. I have been ill for most of my adult life with Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue and autoimmune like diseases with Neuropathy. Conditions that forced me to give up furthering my education after I earned a B.S. in Biology from the University of ■■■■■. I have been on many allopathic medications. The majority of which, had such horrendous side effects that I could no

CONFIDENTIAL

longer take them. Kratom has been a Godsend. It has helped increase my energy. It helps me get out of bed everyday and enables me to exercise more than I thought possible. Kratom reduces my pain and allows me to clean my house, and take care of myself and my family. I don't want to even think what my life will be like if Kratom is made a Schedule 1 drug. I had been on opiates for 5 years, when all the doctors began to stop filling prescriptions and pharmacies began to deny prescriptions. It is terrifying to be dependent on a medication that may be denied to you at any time for any reason. It is also terrifying to have to use medications that may cause your premature death. I was forced to quit working due to my pain and then I found Kratom. If it is taken away, I will have nowhere to turn. The frequently prescribed antidepressants given for my diagnosis have always given me side effects worse than my disease. I will not return to Western Medicine as it has not been a good fit for me. My pain is so great that at times I wonder how I am still alive. If Kratom is made illegal I will be relegated to a hellish life of constant severe chronic pain. This herbal has given me my life and hope back. Please do not take it away

- [REDACTED] WY

I am a 34 year old father and husband and have suffered from severe food allergies. When I turned 28, I quickly discovered something was wrong as I was getting awful gastrointestinal distress, including diarrhea, gas and bloating when eating certain foods. I could not eat many of the major foods most people take for granted today, including dairy, gluten, beef, nuts, chocolate and bananas. I tried everything to cure my distress; from enzymes, to probiotics, to prescription medication as well as other natural remedies. Nothing worked. I spoke with multiple medical professionals, including a Naturopathic Doctor, nutritionists and dieticians. Nothing worked. My distress would become miserable and debilitating, and any little bit of dairy or wheat could set off my stomach. Many days I was spent bent over and curled up in the fetal position due to extreme gas and bloating. Many hours I spent suffering on the toilet with no relief. I could not live a normal life. The proteins my body was sensitive to, were in almost everything. My quality of life had been severely degraded. So I began to scour the internet and do my own research to look for something that could relieve the issues I suffered from. After some time researching, I stumbled up Kratom. People with colitis and other intestinal diseases said that Kratom took the edge off, both pain wise, and intestinally. So I gave it a shot. From the moment I started using Kratom, I was able to eat whatever I wanted with almost no ill-effect. I have been taking Kratom successfully for 3 years. I do not know what I would do if Kratom became illegal and I was unable to use it. I know my quality of life would degrade severely. I know I would have to go back to reading every single ingredient in everything I bought. I know I would not be able to eat nearly anything that is served at a restaurant. My job and career depend on me taking customers to lunch or dinner at restaurants. This would be a severe hit to me and my family as our food bill would increase due to having to use substitutes. I hope the DEA or other government entity would reconsider making Kratom Schedule 1 or my life and my families life will forever change for the worse. - [REDACTED]

I am a 27-year-old honors student, single mother, and community volunteer. I suffer with Ankylosing spondylitis, fibromyalgia, and PTSD. Before I started taking kratom, I was considering dropping out of college and applying for disability assistance because I no longer could tolerate the pain and side effects of my many medications. I was becoming depressed as I could not be physically active with my daughter. I found kratom while asking other chronic illness patients for suggestions on alternative, natural supplements. Kratom helped ease the joint stiffness, muscle spasms, and panic attacks I was constantly experiencing. I completed last semester with a 4.0 GPA, won a prestigious scholarship, and felt well enough to mentor at-risk youth. I also now do yoga, participate in an honors society at school, and enjoy outdoor activities with my daughter. I have never experienced adverse side effects from kratom, and I have been able to stop taking muscle relaxers, narcotic pain medication, and antidepressants. My quality of life has drastically improved because of kratom, and there will be dire consequences if I can no longer use it as part of my health and wellness routine. [REDACTED], NC

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a 55 year old mother of 4 and grandmother of 6. I was a legal assistant/ paralegal for years for a large law firm. In 1995 I fell and hurt my back and had back surgery. I later, in 2006 had a large deep vein thrombosis in my left leg, from my groin to my foot. I now have permanent nerve damage and neuropathy. I was on methadone through pain management for 6 years. I tried the blocks, a neuro-stimulator , physical therapies and of course the methadone. I lived my life in a constant fog, unable to care for myself or my daughter. I stopped taking methadone in 2010 and just suffered. I spent most of my time in bed, avoiding family functions because the pain was so severe. I looked into natural pain relief and found Kratom. I have been using Kratom now for about 7 months. I function and find myself able to do more things ,such as buying my own groceries due to the pain relief. I am able to think clearly and enjoy my grandkids (I missed so much time with them). Kratom gave me my life back. I love my life now. The thought of losing something natural, an herb, that is safe and effective scares me. What will my choices be then? Am I doomed to a life of severe pain, or opiates that slowly take my life away? Do I go back to just existing because it hurts to bad to live? - [REDACTED] Kentucky

I'm 35 years old. I started using kratom after many failed prescription medications and jail visits. At 18, I was prescribed oxytocin, then later Xanax, Wellbutrin, Zoloft, Methadone, Klonopin, Adderall, and Suboxone. I couldn't stay clean or keep a job. I was always relying on the state for food stamps and welfare to provide for my kids. Today I've been clean 3 years and I have a full-time job. I don't rely on the state for anything. If kratom is banned I could die or be a felon!!! Thanks [REDACTED]

When I was 17 years old my mother was shot and killed by my stepfather in the front yard of my house. I witnessed everything. I tried to kill him before he drove off to his apartment to later commit suicide. I witnessed my mother's death at an age where my brain was in need of maturing. I developed severe PTSD. My senior year of high school was mostly sleeping through classes and getting involved with the wrong crowd. Before this, I was a great student and never missed a day of school. At one point the PTSD was so bad I wouldn't come out of the bathroom after a shower due the fact that I thought someone was waiting to kill me on the other side of the door. I would wait for hours and cry. Completely turned my family away and shut them out of my life. I ran off to college to escape everyone I knew. I turned to drugs to get away from the severe depression and anxiety from the PTSD. My life was a train wreck for about 8 years. I found Kratom and sobered up. I don't drink but once every 2 months thanks to kratom. I'm happy to say that I consider myself sober thanks to this plant. It has truly saved my life and helped me from killing myself. I finally have my life back and am happy for the first time in 9 years. I turn 27 in december, and I have a positive outlook on my life for the first time in years. I work out 5 days a week and am in the best shape of my life. To add to my wonderful life i have an amazing 3 year old son. If you want more details, feel free to message me. I am scared for my life for this ban. I CANNOT go back to my old life without a fight. I truly and honestly witnessed hell at such a young age. I would not wish this card of life on anyone, not even my worst enemies. I beg you to reconsider for my life, my son's future, and so many others lives.

- [REDACTED]

I'm 55 years old. I'm gainfully employed, a homeowner, a grandmother, a National Merit Scholar (way back in my school days). I'm the farthest thing from a drug addict, but prescription painkillers nearly made me one. I had an accident a few years ago and was very slow to heal. Before I realized it, I'd been taking the Vicodin my doctor prescribed for 4 months and I'd become entirely too fond of it. I started researching for a way to give up the painkillers but still manage the pain. I opted to try kratom and it did just what I needed it to. It got me off the pain pills and back to a healthy and productive work & social life. Kratom is now my go-to when I need pain treatment, because I don't ever want to tempt fate with prescription painkillers again. I also have a family member who prefers it to the Prozac that he'd been taking for 20+ years. Kratom provides him with anti-anxiety benefits without the unpleasant side-effects of the pills. I

CONFIDENTIAL

would hate to see a safe and natural alternative to dangerous opiates and chemical mood enhancers taken away by this ill-advised scheduling - [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

I'm 44 years old. When I was about 22, I was diagnosed with depression, OCD and Anxiety Disorders. The doctor put me on 20 mg of Prozac and over the years has increased the dosage to 60 mg. But over the years, I realized it wasn't working well anymore, because those feelings of anxiety were coming back and I couldn't shake them off. About 4 years ago, I decided to try kratom for my mood disorders and it works so much better. I don't have to take the Prozac anymore and I don't have the undesirable side-effects from the prescription drug. I've lost close to 50 excess pounds, because I'm much more alert and active on kratom. I used to come home and sleep for 15 hours a day. Now I sleep about 6 to 8 hours, like normal people do. Not to get too personal, but the Prozac also had a negative effect on my sex drive and my wife is much happier now that I've found a better anti-anxiety treatment. I've been taking kratom daily for over 4 years now. It doesn't get me high – it makes me feel like a normal human being again. I get things done and my judgment doesn't get clouded by anxiety and paranoia like it used to. Please do not ban kratom – I don't want to have to go back to a less effective choice with unpleasant side-effects. -- [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm a 41 year old stay at home mom to a 4 year old boy. I have suffered for many years from late stage Lyme disease, which is notoriously difficult to treat. My symptoms include deep fatigue and a lot of varied pain, among many others. Kratom has been more useful to manage my pain and fatigue than any other pharmaceutical or herbal remedy I have tried. I have been taking it regularly for well over a year with no signs of building up a tolerance, or any other negative side effect apart from some occasional thirst or constipation which is easily managed. Kratom truly has become instrumental and indispensable to me being able to lead a semblance of a normal life while fighting this insidious disease. If it were banned, not only would I personally suffer, but it would also strongly impact the kind of mother I can be to my son, and wife to my husband. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], [REDACTED] CA

I'm a 56 yr old wife, mother, mother of an angel (my [REDACTED], age 11 1/2, to CF in 2000), grandmother, and former PI (specialties: Reuniting families and assisting in the search for the missing, primarily children) who was forced to retire too soon due to; Chronic Migraine (15+/mo), Pancreatitis, IBS, Fibromyalgia and more recently, MS. I am unable to take any type of OTC or prescribed pain medications; my system simply treats them as poison and I wind up admitted to the hospital w/migraine, uncontrolled projectile vomiting and life threatening extremely low blood pressure. For the past 15 years, I have dealt with the extreme pain of my various illnesses myself, w/no meds, which caused even more health issues, extremely high blood pressure and depression amongst them.

I honestly didn't realize how much pain I was in on a daily basis, until I tried Kratom and within minutes, 80% of the pain disappeared. In addition, I was not dizzy, "high", buzzed - none of that. All I felt other than the lessening of pain, was total relief. It's been a year now and Kratom continues to be a God-send. I am not addicted to it, take when needed, and with this miracle, have begun to take up the dropped reins of my life. The migraines are not completely eased, but all other painful symptoms are, and I am now advocating for the missing again; reuniting families again. Kratom has helped hundreds of thousands of folks, with pain, and to recover from addiction. To ban this natural miracle would cause us all including myself, to return to a dark life full of pain. I cannot even imagine how that will be possible, to return to my housebound, bedridden pain-filled self. I just can't. I just cannot comprehend how we're expected to do that. How are we to explain to our families and children who are so thrilled to have the old "us" back? How? - Kind Regards, [REDACTED] [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED], MO

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a fifty-six year old woman who has been partially disabled and in pain for most of my life, due to scoliosis and lordosis, two kinds of spinal curvature. I now also suffer from debilitating arthritis, fibromyalgia, sciatica, migraine and pain-related sleep disorder. The herb kratom helps enormously with all of these conditions. Pharmaceutical medications do not address these illnesses sufficiently. Without the herb kratom I would be mostly immobile, unable to do the limited work I can now do. I wouldn't be able to contribute to our local economy as I do now. I might not be able to live independently, as I do now. The pharmaceutical medications that I'd likely be prescribed are very addictive and also very harmful to the body. This is widely documented. Forced to rely only on prescription medication, I would be dealing with issues associated with those medications on top of my illnesses, resulting in decreased well being overall. Because of a lack of independence and decreased well being and health, I would likely suffer depression, necessitating treatment for that issue also. Pharmaceutical treatments for depression have their own very serious risks, also widely documented. Basically, I see a future of needless suffering & a downward spiral if the herb kratom is banned. I have been using kratom for two years. The sense that I have the power to determine my own health is extremely important to my well being also. ~ [REDACTED], N.Y.

I'm a 32 year old responsible woman who is also a single mother to two little boys. I have a B.A. In Psychology and am a domestic abuse survivor. I've been using Kratom responsibly for the past 6-9 months as a supplement to my Dr. Prescribed medications for Narcolepsy... I was diagnosed in May 2015. I have depended on stimulant medication prescribed by my doctor (in doses well above the FDA recommendations) for the better part of 6 years now. I have also depended on anxiety medications (benzos) to combat the anxiety that the stimulants were giving me. I have tried every single stimulant on the market and almost every single antidepressant on the market. The stimulants came with a lot of side effects and I hated how up and down they make you feel. Nothing was ever consistent and I was always tired. It was a disaster. The pharmaceutical drugs helped minimally but did not get me anywhere near being a functional member of society (let alone a mommy). I haven't been able to work for the past 2 years thanks to my condition. My ex husband's child support, food stamps and parents have been my only source of income for quite a while now. When I started looking into Kratom I was at a point physically where I didn't think pharmaceuticals could help me much more, so I needed another option. Narcolepsy can quite literally destroy your life and body, and at my worst I was sleeping 18-20 hours a day... I could not accept that as my reality because of my two children. I did all my research and decided to give Kratom a try- crossing my fingers it would help me.

Kratom in low amounts is stimulating and so I found that just a very small amount (1-2 teaspoons) a few times a day helped me tremendously. Not only did it decrease my extreme daytime fatigue, it almost completely eliminated my anxiety. When I first started using Kratom I had no idea just how much it would change my life- not only was I able to stop taking Anxiety medications (benzos) I was also able to stop taking stimulants. 1 teaspoon of Kratom three times a day did more for me than 120mg of Adderall and 3mg of Ativan. I am feeling better than I have in a really long time and Kratom is a really big part of the reason why. My health is completely consistent and because of that, life is so much easier. I've been thinking about getting a part time job in the next 2-3 months. I will not be able to do that if Kratom becomes a schedule 1. Honestly, I fear for what my life will go back to if I am no longer able to use Kratom. I love being healthy and I'm going to be honest- I'm very upset that this is happening. What did I do to deserve this? I'm just a single mother trying to raise my babies in my small town, and I got a stupid thing called Narcolepsy. I fought like hell to get better and to where I am now, life without Kratom will be terrible.

My life with no Kratom will be one I never thought I would have to go back to. When I have gone 30 days without it, I will be back to relying on just prescription medications to manage the symptoms of Narcolepsy. Adderall and Ativan, because there is nothing more helpful than Adderall and with that comes a lot of anxiety as a side effect. I will be ok one day and not the next, and when I say not ok I mean I'm literally not able to wake up and function outside of my bed. Within a month I will become

CONFIDENTIAL

tolerant to the Adderall and will have zero good days anymore. I will most likely have to get in touch with my doctor and have her switch me to a different stimulant in the hopes that it works. It won't, I've been through this cycle many times. I will have no option but to deal with the fatigue and will not be able to look for part time work like I was anticipating doing in the next few months.

This ban will not only impact me, it will impact my children as well. They have long forgotten the Mommy who was always too tired to play with them, cook for them and enjoy life with them. I will lose so much more than just energy as I will not be able to spend nearly as much time with them due to sleeping all day. They deserve to have me at my best to take them to school, cook healthy meals for them, teach them how to play soccer- all things I can do now, but will not be able to do after September 30. It breaks my heart for them, for me, and for everyone else who will be affected by this scheduling. It is unnecessary and not fair- and I hope the people responsible for this know how much they are hurting people like me- you're hurting my children too.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a mother of 4 children. I work in the medical field in a high up position. I am involved in my kids school and after school activities. I run a non-profit group for kids with cancer. I have never been an alcoholic or misused drugs. I googled something natural for anxiety and came across this plant. All those things listed above, I wasn't able to do for a few years due to horrible anxiety. I wasn't able to handle the social interaction. I could barely make a phone call. Now I am back out in the world. My anxiety is under control for the first time in years and I am afraid of going backwards. This plant has changed my life for the better.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 42 yr old chronic pain patient. Before I found Kratom I had become totally bedridden and dependent on prescription pain meds. After suffering horrible withdrawals, I vowed never to go back to pills but the pain was too much for me to handle. I eventually attempted suicide to end the unbearable physical pain. When I was released from the psych ward, I started looking for a natural way to relieve my pain and heard about kratom. Kratom has given me my life back. I am no longer bedridden. I can enjoy playing with my son and granddaughter. I no longer want to die but I am frightened. I am afraid that if kratom is taken from me, I will not be strong enough. I am worried that it will push me back to the pills or even worse. I cannot handle going through withdrawal again. I JUST CAN'T. If I do not go back to those horrible pills, I fear that I may once again become suicidal. And next time I may not be so lucky. I am literally afraid for my life.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I have suffered from endometriosis since I was 14 years old. Endometriosis is a chronic, incurable condition that causes intense pain on an intermittent basis. When I was 21, I underwent surgery to remove the endometrial adhesions, but the adhesions quickly returned, which is extremely common. I tried a variety of medications to manage the condition, including NSAIDs, but by the time I was 25, my doctor told me that my only remaining options were to take opioid painkillers or undergo a hysterectomy. Everything changed when I learned about kratom. Kratom helps to ease the endometriosis "flare-ups" without the use of opiate painkillers. I have been using Kratom for several years with no ill effects. It has helped me tremendously with my symptoms, allowing me to be an engaged wife, mother, and contributing member of my community. My health has never been better. Without kratom, I will be forced to use opiate pain medications or undergo a hysterectomy at the age of 34. I am hoping for an opportunity to have a second child, and I am not exaggerating at all when I say that kratom is what is preserving my fertility. -- [REDACTED] [REDACTED], Age 34, [REDACTED], WA

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a 32 year old stay at home parent. I take care of my one year old and I am fostering my seven year old nephew who has complex medical conditions. I have been taking Kratom for over 6 months for my fibromyalgia, back pain and endometriosis. I was able to get off my prescribed narcotic medication thanks to Kratom. Kratom helps manage my daily pain, mood and gives me energy that I have been lacking for years. Kratom makes me feel normal, unlike the narcotics that made me feel like a zombie. I can only hope that this plant stays legal, so I can continue giving 110% to my family and live a drug free and clear headed life.

I am a 38-year-old single mother of two with fibromyalgia and kratom has been a GODSEND in my life. Kratom makes me feel well and energetic again. It relieves my pain and gives a boost to my mood. My children need me and I am scared to death that the ban will leave me exhausted, in pain and unable to work or care for them.

I'm a 34 year old Ohio native and I used kratom to get off of heroin. Full stop. No suboxone, no methadone, just plain leaf Kratom and a bed. I found that it also helped with my anxiety, so I asked my doctor to taper me off of Klonopin. Kratom is also a wonderful antidepressant and I've asked my doctor to lower my dose of Effexor. She was doubtful and didn't want to do it, but she did, and I'm in better shape than ever. Once this scheduling happens, I honestly don't know what's going to happen to me.

I am 57 and have been nearly bedridden for 12 years due to a wreck that has left me with a severe case of occipital neuralgia. Nothing, including narcotics, has given me any consistent relief until now. I just found Kratom about 6 weeks ago and the difference has been amazing with no side effects. Please don't take away the life I have just been able to start living again. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Oklahoma.

I'm a 42 year old female with several health problems which cause chronic pain. Kratom has by far exceeded previous contemporary treatments and medications. Before this DEA intent was filed, I believed that with the help of kratom I would quite possibly be able to work again. Now my life is on hold again. I'm terrified of the possibility that I may not only lose 'my miracle', but that should I need to go back into pain management, I may not even have access to my previous medicines due to the sweeping changes made in the few months since I voluntarily left. What particular type of evil is in play when one is persecuted for trying to make healthier, safer, more responsible choices? I'm at a loss to understand this. - [REDACTED] ID

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm a 41 year old woman who lives with CRPS, the most painful disease known to man, Multiple Sclerosis, and Fibromyalgia. For 16+ years I've dealt with debilitating chronic pain, depression, and anxiety as a result. I've tried almost every therapy and medication offered to me over the years, with very little positive effects. The pain was very poorly controlled and the depression had me in a place emotionally, that I was suicidal. I saw myself as nothing but a burden to the people around me and the world as a whole. I heard about Kratom in a social media group for chronic pain. I researched, and with the blessing of my doctors, who all felt it was a safer alternative to the opiates and narcotics I'd been reliant on to that point, I gave it a chance. 11 months later I have found some pain relief and find that it's enough to allow me to be an active participant in the world around me, as opposed to a sobbing lump on the sofa or in bed. I am able to do basic household chores again, and to get out into the world for short periods. Things that weren't possible before kratom. I literally fear for my life without the help of this herb. - [REDACTED]

CONFIDENTIAL

I'm a college student studying computer science and I've long been a musician, which has kept my hands and arms extremely busy for most of my waking hours. During my senior year of high school I started to notice pain creeping up in my arms and this grew to be debilitating. I was made to choose between completing my school work or practicing my french horn enough to be ready for my weekly lesson (I attended an arts school so much playing was demanded of me). I took measures to reduce performance anxiety so I wouldn't be squeezing the instrument unnecessarily intensely which helped a bit, but the pain didn't cease entirely. Going to a doctor was unattractive to me as I don't trust myself to handle messing with opioid medications, and turning to NSAIDs actually ended up giving me a stomach ulcer after using ibuprofen daily for a long time period. Finally during my freshman year of college I was introduced to kratom at a local kava bar and found that it helped immensely with my symptoms. Ever since, I've used it on days when my arms are in high demand and I no longer had to worry about putting myself in immense pain just to maintain basic function in my life. I've never been anywhere close to addicted to kratom, and from what I understand it has many pharmacological targets not shared with traditional opioids that may mediate its more mild dependence liability (antiglutamatergic activity, specifically, unless I'm not remembering correctly). So now with the DEA's knee-jerk banning of kratom, the only two medicinal herbs I know of that helped me with my symptoms are deemed to have "no accepted medical use" and attempting to use them will deem me a serious criminal to polite society.

I am [REDACTED] [REDACTED] age 44. I took Kratom to get away from Opiates. Kratom helped address the four things that always made me relapse; depression, anxiety, fatigue and pain. Kratom brought me back from the brink. I would likely have overdosed, died or been thrown in jail if not for kratom. I know that I am not the only one for which this is true. If kratom is taken away, I can't say what would happen. I would lose my drive to live and be a better person. I will be sorely tempted every day to give in and give up. God knows what will happen. I can only hope that the DEA or congress will see how kratom has saved my life and not make me a criminal. This is all too real. This is my life. I don't want to be a criminal, relapse or die. Please don't take away what allowed me to be a productive member of society after I just got my life back in order. Please don't do this to so many people. We want to live normal lives within just laws of society. This ban is a grave and a destructive tragedy.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], 44, father of one, and I am a disabled professional with 15 years of print production experience for large fortune 500 companies. I got injured in 1990 and was in a car accident in 2011 that brought my previous injury to the breaking point. After 2 major back surgeries and the loss of my job, I am waiting for my Social Security hearing (29 months to date) and have no health insurance. I have been taking Kratom for pain (about 2 years), and have no way to get any other medicines. Kratom helps me to feel a little better, and if the DEA pushes this ban through, I will lose access to the only pain control I have. If this ban goes through, I am horrified at the pain I will again feel. Kratom allows me to move around the house and to do simple things in my everyday life, that others take for granted. Kratom allows me a little relief I cannot get elsewhere. Thank you - [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am a 54 year old female. 20 plus years ago I was in an auto accident. I had a lot of soft tissue damage. Since the accident I have been diagnosed with more than 20 diagnoses. Everything from Fibromyalgia to occipital neuralgia. My life became one of pain at the moment of impact. I was told for the first 6 months I would get better, but I didn't, I got worse. I am intolerant to most (almost all) pain medications. I made a number of attempts to take them but they just made me too sick. I then tried every therapy possible. I started getting trigger point injections and cervical epidural injections, but they just never did anything positive for me (although I went in for dozens of these out of desperation). I even considered having my nerves burned until I was told the risks and the possibility that the pain would get a whole lot worse before it MIGHT get better (and the fact that the nerves could come

CONFIDENTIAL

back so to speak). In the last 2 years I have had to have 4 surgeries, 2 on my right knee and one on each shoulder. I made it exactly one day for 3 of the surgeries on pain meds before I switched to Kratom. (The last surgery, I was on pain meds a lot longer than I thought I would be due to surgery failure. I questioned the entire time if the vomiting induced by the medications was worth it and decided no, and switched back to Kratom 2 weeks later. The pain from the last surgery continues to this day but I only use Kratom for it). I simply cannot tolerate opiates or even the synthetics (Tramadol). Kratom has given me my life back better than anything else ever could. I still have days that are not so good, but I am no longer lying there waiting impatiently for death. Now I find myself living in fear (and my family has fears as well) that come the end of September I will have to stop the Kratom due to DEA's decision. I feel like I have 11 days at the time of this writing for relief and then I am not sure what is going to happen. KRATOM SAVES LIVES! Please save so many of us from a possible horrendous fate and keep this plant legal and accessible.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from Massachusetts. I am 46 years old. I lost my daughter, [REDACTED], to this opioid epidemic, over one year ago. She got addicted to oxycontin that was flooding the streets before anyone was knowledgeable of the dangers. I never had a chance to warn her. She battled until she was 28. If I knew then what I know now about kratom, I'm confident she would still be here. I now use kratom for the emotional pain I will have for the rest of my life. I have been using kratom for about 9 months. I use it all day long. It gets me through each day without feeling so lost. I get no side effects, and I use a lot. I'm distraught at the thought of not having this wonderful, god-given plant for my pain.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 37 years old, I work as a customer service manager, I am a mother of four, a wife, a daughter, and soon to be grandmother. Two years ago I was on the verge of losing my job due to poor attendance because of the pain and fatigue associated with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, fibromyalgia, and neuropathy. The pain would keep me in bed for days unable to function. I joined a couple Facebook support groups, because I was to the point that I prayed to go to sleep and not wake up. Someone had shared an article on kratom, so I did a lot of research and listened to a lot of testimony. I decided to try it, because I had already tried everything else. Two years later, I am back to working full time, and am no longer at any risk of losing my job. I carry my own medical insurance, and pay my own medical bills. My quality of life has improved to where I enjoy waking up and facing each new day. To take away something mild without side effects is inhumane. We are adults who have a right to choose what we put into our bodies. My frame of mind greatly improved after tapering off of the prescriptions that had such harsh side effects. How is this a bad thing? If they make kratom a schedule 1, it will confirm my belief that the government doesn't care about the people anymore, that all they care about is money. Let us live our lives in peace, in the land of the free that America was supposed to stand for.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 34 year old Innovation and Experience Designer specializing in the research and development of natural gestures for human-computer interfaces in cognitive systems engineering. I have been sick for 25 years with invisible illnesses and autoimmune conditions. So somehow I've managed to grow up with crippling symptoms and yet manage to succeed. But lately my symptoms have degenerated to the point of disability. On good days, I can shuffle-walk. I can barely sit up and have a conversation. I can chew. On bad days, my eyes swell shut, my fever confines me to lying down, I'm nauseated and have no strength to walk or sit up, and intense burning neuropathy pours like hot lava throughout my back. Many people with invisible illnesses suffer in silence. Our doctors call us liars; they say it's "something the mind makes up to get attention"; they tell us our problems are weight-gain/loss related while refusing to believe that the weight issues are the result—not the cause—of our pain and fatigue. I was a child the first time a specialist, I had traveled 3 hours to see, told me to "stop making up the symptoms." I was a preteen struggling to breathe when a pain specialist accused me of coming to him "just for narcotics." Very recently, I finally discovered the source for all my autoimmune responses—Lyme Disease and co-infections. These bacterial infections have burrowed deep into my

CONFIDENTIAL

joints, my organs, my bone tissue, even my brain—into crevices where white blood cells have no access, far beyond the reach of antibiotics, even where palliative pain medications give me no comfort. Like all late-stage autoimmune Lyme patients, the treatments I undergo are experimental, cutting edge, involving new medical technology at the forefront of a poorly understood disease. I travel far to seek treatments. And in order to do so, I require at least some relief from symptoms to give me the sleep and the energy I need to do what is necessary for my treatments. I have never taken narcotics in my life; I have never taken nor been addicted to opiates. Yet I take Kratom because it gives me long lasting pain relief from symptoms that are otherwise entirely crippling, without the nauseating and dizzying side effects I get from prescription pain drugs. I have never felt it to have any addictive hold over me; when I don't need it, I don't need it and that is a surprising and wonderful feeling. But when I do, I most certainly do. It is not a cure; but it is the only thing that allows me to get to my doctor appointments, to sleep without painful tremors, to meet with Lyme specialists, and to aid me in my journey for a cure. If you take away this means for pain relief, you are making it impossible for me to seek the care and treatments I need. If you seek to regulate it, then do so without scheduling it in the same category as heroin, and do it in a way that lets those of us in legitimate pain access it as the tool that it is, a medicine.

I am a 50yr old mother and grandma that suffers from chronic pain. Diagnosed with several ailments, my lower back is what puts me down on a daily basis. The pain takes away my sleep and has me tossing and turning most nights which led to depression. It was awful until I found kratom 3+ years ago. My daughters introduced me to this natural plant that has since changed my life. I can sleep. I can move around more easily. I laugh and smile again. What was once a bitter woman that people hated to be around, because I was miserable, has turned into a friendly, happy, caring, loving person that has become a great mother and grandmother. Kratom has gave me life back. I use it daily to help reduce pain and lift my mood.

I feel if kratom is banned, it will send me back into the doctor's office trying to get painkillers. I feel like my life as I know it, will change back to where I once was. Depressed, in pain, miserable, sleepless and hopeless. I don't want to become a criminal for using a plant that is illegal. I need kratom in my life daily. I've tried other plants and most medicines made today, and none of them work for me. I love that kratom gave me a freedom of choice. I don't have doctors degrading me, thinking it's all about the drugs when it wasn't. It was, and always has been about the pain relief. Kratom helps with that. It's given me so much more than I ever thought possible. My dignity, self esteem, worth, happiness, joy, family, friends, all came back to me. Please don't take it away.

I am a 44 year old mother of a college student. I work in the corporate world and am a Vice President of Sales for a successful software company, have a successful career, and I am college educated. I pay my taxes. I have never been arrested. I have never even had a speeding ticket. I don't drink much and I don't do recreational drugs. I grew up with parents who did believe that conventional medicine is a last resort to use only when natural medicine has failed or is not helpful enough. We drank a lot of yucky herbs and learned to take horse pill sized vitamins at a very young age.

About 7 years ago I was in an auto accident, where I suffered two herniated discs and several torn muscles. Since then, additional discs have herniated at random due to gravity. One of the discs is literally pressing 20% into my spinal cord. Doctors and Chiropractors alike recommend surgery (I don't trust the neck surgeries, as I have seen too many failed). The last Osteopath (about a year and a half ago) I saw couldn't believe I was even functioning and immediately prescribed me a bottle of Percocet. I still have them, and hold them for emergencies. He said that if I didn't want surgery now, that he would gladly send me to pain management. My regular doctor will prescribe Vicodin if I ask, because my pain and ailment is quite well documented. The drugs are not hard to get when you have proof of pain like mine. Here are two pictures that are MRI's of MY NECK:

CONFIDENTIAL



The 2nd picture is a top down view. The white spot in the middle is my spinal cord. The dark part protruding into it is my disc, stuck into my spinal cord. This is what pain looks like on film. What it feels like is a constant pinch in my neck, that runs down to my upper trapezius and down the back of my shoulder. At times when inflammation is present, the pain can go all the way down my arm and even make me lose all feeling, except for pain and numbness in my fingertips. My right hand has permanent weakness, and this is documented by both doctors and chiropractors. This injury means that I can't open a jar or do anything that requires hand strength. Besides a college degree, I also have a massage therapy license. I do not practice any longer because I am not able.

I do have chronic pain. I do have in my possession, Percocet. The same bottle the Osteopath prescribed over a year ago. In the past year, I have taken 3 of them. The year the accident occurred, I spent about two weeks taking full doses of Vicodin every day. I started to feel a craving for them as they exited my system. I knew about Kratom, but had only tried it once. Someone suggested I try it for pain. To my surprise, it worked and that's why I don't use the Percocet.

I drink one or two cups of Kratom tea daily (most days). I have been for several years. Sometimes I travel for work and don't have it for several days. It does not bother me. I don't seem to have any form of withdrawal. I make the tea at home from leaf purchased on the internet. I drink it in the afternoon, when sitting in the chair at my desk has started to wear on my neck and shoulders. It enables me to keep working with a clear mind and reduces my pain. If I am still in pain at the end of the day, I have a second cup. Never has my boss or coworkers asked if I am messed up, on drugs or thought I was not ok. I function completely normally with Kratom. The pain is reduced enough that I can continue working and remain productive. I can even do gentle yoga a few times a week. Without it, I would need to resort to the Percocets that I keep in my purse for fear of having a bad pain episode. I don't know what I would do if the Kratom ban goes through. Live in pain? Live with a foggy mind and end up losing my job due to real drugs and what they call "pain management?" Those are the only options available, neither of which I want.

I have annual check ups from my doctor. All of my blood work is normal, everything shows that I am a healthy individual. If you want to see copies, I will send them to you. Kratom has not harmed my organs, my cholesterol is perfect, my vitamin levels are also perfect. All is well! Please don't take it away! I'm so scared to have to make a choice between constant pain and losing my mind on hard, dangerous Opioid drugs. If Kratom is banned, will the DEA compensate me in salary, since the ban may cost me my job? Sincerely, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] FL

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a 42 year old mother of 2 suffering from bulging and torn disc at L4 and L5. I suffer from chronic pain daily as a result. I spent 7 years allowing a doctor to prescribe me opiates as the answer. My breaking point was when I came down with the flu and couldn't keep anything down including my meds. Sadly my body had become addicted to the medication and I was hospitalized as a result of the withdrawal. That was my breaking point in deciding I would not allow my body to be controlled by a pharmaceutical. I found Kratom and it provided more relief than I ever had taking the morphine. I no longer have to worry about being addicted to a medication and I can once again function and participate with my family. Taking Kratom away will leave me no choice but to return to pharmaceuticals to ease my pain. This world has enough of an opiate problem without adding me as another victim to that number.

About two years ago I was going through a very difficult period in my life. My wife and I had separated, and not long after, the resulting depression that set in started to take a toll on my work and my personal life. My doctor put me on antidepressants. Within a few weeks things got better. My wife returned and my work and personal life improved. About a year later though, something happened. The medications stopped working. Literally just STOPPED. It was like a light switch had been turned off. My doctor and I tried different dosages and medications but none of them worked. However, because of the dosage changes, my body and mind started going through withdrawal symptoms. I don't know if you've ever experienced these symptoms, but I pray you haven't and that you NEVER have to go through them. One of the symptoms can only be described as a "brain zap". It's literally the feeling of an electric current going through your head. Every few seconds...zap...zap...zap. Couple that with migraines, inability to sleep, and mood swings like you wouldn't believe. There was only one drug that mitigated the symptoms. I found that Tramadol stopped the brain zaps which allowed me to sleep which allowed me to regain my strength and keep everything under control. Then the FDA/DEA reclassified Tramadol. My doctor couldn't prescribe it to me. I started to spiral down again, but then a miracle happened. A friend of mine suggested I try an herbal remedy called Kratom. I did some quick research and decided to go for it. I was looking for any relief. My order arrived a few days later from a company in Austin. I can't adequately put into words what happened other than to say it was a GOD SEND. A TRUE MIRACLE FROM HEAVEN. I found relief within 20 minutes. In fact, not ONLY did the brain zaps stop, but over the next few days and weeks, I found it had an analgesic effect on my back and provided me with an energy boost.

I have been using kratom now for a little over a year and it's helped me get my life back. I'm no longer on antidepressants or any kind of pain medication for my back. I have energy again and I no longer have the mood swings that plagued me for so long.

Please help me and countless others. - [REDACTED], TX

I am a 51 year old male from [REDACTED] Florida. I was prescribed narcotic pain medication in 2001 for degenerative spine injuries from working full-time as a plumber since 1980. Two of my lower disc in my spine are squished out from the front of my spine and they are in-operable. I currently still work 70 hours a week. Narcotic pain medication which consists of an opiate, worked for the first few months of the 15 years. It started off with a simple prescription. A decade later I was on the strongest dose allowable, taking a synthetic opiate called Methadone eight times a day the highest milligram tablet. With this narcotic pain medication, I had to get prescription opiates of different types for breakthrough pain. Those prescriptions lead to asthma and I needed prescriptions for that. All of the above led to prescriptions for depression. At the end of the decade I was taking six prescriptions costing \$800 a month. My health was so poor I was only working 10 hours a week. On the verge of losing my business and all I owned, my son introduced me to KRATOM. Within months I stopped taking all of the prescriptions and within two days I was not taking Methadone and only KRATOM tea. Five years later I only make a cup of tea for my chronic pain. This plant which is in the coffee family has no tolerance build up and no dependency. I cannot go back to taking pharmaceutical opiates or any synthesized

CONFIDENTIAL

drug. Today I am free from side effects from the prescriptions I used to take, and I feel like I am 19 years old again, back to working 70 hours. If you ban this plant which you do not have any constitutional right to do so according to the 9th and 10th amendment you will see tens of thousands of people die from drug overdose and suicides and crime to pay for prescriptions they can't afford. No one has ever died from taking KRATOM! You already know this. Stop working for big Pharma. The research you did to get this ban, you surely realized that Kratom is the only remedy for many illnesses and had no side effects. Do the right thing and lift the ban because thirty days after its banned, those who had to stop using pharmaceutical prescriptions, which is everybody who's using this plant, will get very active and boisterous about government corruption and relationships that should not exist between bureaucrats and corporations. We don't need anymore problems with trust in government and we don't need any of nature's plants banned. You don't have the right or the authority to ban a plant!

I am a 56 year old grandma raising 2 grandchildren. 13 years ago I was struck head on by a drunk driver. Prior to that I was a hospital technician and on my way to finally getting my RN license. Since that day I have been a chronic pain sufferer. 13 surgeries, hip replacement, MRSA, 2 ankle replacements still pending, fibromyalgia, and hypothyroidism. I have been on pain meds with all their nasty side effects since. The pain doesn't go away. My doc's answer is to prescribe more. Prescribe stronger meds. More side effects, less living. I found Kratom through a website for fibro pain sufferers, did some research and very hesitantly ordered some. Luckily I found a wonderful vender and to my surprise Kratom worked. It helped with my pain, depression, and anxiety. Because believe me when you are a chronic pain sufferer, depression and anxiety are both part of it! Kratom does not take away all of my pain, but makes it livable. It improves my attitude and makes me look forward to life again. There is no high from Kratom. If there was, I would not use it. I have used it for months and then stopped with no problems. This plant has helped so many. Regulate, please do not ban. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Arkansas

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and I am a 41 year old woman with mild cerebral palsy (from brain injury at birth), and an autoimmune disorder which is on the Lupus spectrum. I am married, work in construction management and am a professional musician and photographer. Kratom helps me manage my chronic pain and fatigue symptoms. Before Kratom, I took a number of painkillers and muscle relaxants, but they left me very groggy and dizzy. I also developed gastritis from the overuse of painkillers, so I had to stop. It was difficult to be fully functional at work, at home and socially. I felt as though I was in too much pain to be engaged with the world. I became increasingly depressed and withdrawn. But fortunately, a friend introduced me to Kratom. It is a supplement that eased my chronic pain and fatigue to a level where I can now be more active and involved. It has made a tremendous difference in my life. I recently started going to the gym to make my body even stronger now that the pain has been lifted enough for me to do physical activity. I have increased my work hours and my outlook on life has brightened. I am much happier and healthier overall. Please do not ban this supplement that allows me, and so many people like me, to function in a fuller, more productive way. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], FL

My name is [REDACTED] and I have been using kratom for four years now for a lot of reasons. Ptsd ,bipolar depression, restless limb, and back pain. This plant has helped so many people for so many different reasons. I was able to stop taking a few of my prescription meds when i started taking kratom. I still take a few but not as many. People addicted to heroin and various pain meds are able to use this harmless plant to get free of their addiction. Thousands and thousands of lives will be negatively affected by this ban.

I am a 42 year old man with a wife and 2 sons. I have a bachelor's degree and work as a network engineer. I'm a musician and artist. In 2002 I was suffering with chronic back pain. It was so bad that I couldn't exercise and it affected my work life where I spent large parts of my day sitting. I gained 60lbs and was eventually diagnosed with a degenerative disc disease and sent to a spine specialist. They gave

CONFIDENTIAL

me narcotic pain killers. A LOT of them. They helped the pain but made me groggy, drowsy, constipated, etc. I was never an addict but I was headed that way when I found kratom. After starting kratom I was off of all narcotic pain killers. I was able to get back to soccer and lost 70 lbs. I started coaching soccer for my kids and volunteering to help kids w special needs play soccer. I wasn't groggy or drowsy at work and in the 5 years I've been using kratom, I've had no side-effects. Stopping it suddenly will cause me some fatigue and an upset stomach. Hardly anything compared to stopping narcotics. If this ban goes through I will be faced with either suffering in pain daily or going back to doctors who are reluctant and judgemental about prescribing narcotic painkillers. I have a lot to lose if kratom is made illegal. Taking narcotic painkillers makes you feel euphoric. Taking more than you should gets you high. Kratom does not make a person high.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 34 year old married woman and a mom of two little boys. I have an MBA degree but I currently have decided to stay at home with my kids. I am also a person who has greatly struggled with depression and anxiety, and chronic debilitating tmj pain. Those issues resulted in me drinking a lot, and I became a very dangerous alcoholic. According to the doctor back then I was ruining my liver, I was also ruining my life. I could not hold relationships and felt totally isolated. Thank God I quit drinking before I had the kids. Alcohol is truly the most dangerous drug out there, legal or not. It kills more than the opiate epidemic does each year. The fact that I can walk right next door to get deadly alcohol makes me scared, If they succeed in banning Kratom. Kratom has helped me remain sober for almost six years now. It helps greatly with my depression and anxiety so that I was happy again and could form relationships and got married. It also helps tremendously with my severe tmj. I was supposed to have surgery over 20 years ago but my dad didn't want to pay for it, so now my teeth don't fit together and my jaw hurts so bad I don't like to talk or eat. Kratom has also helped me greatly with that pain. I can now live my life in less emotional and physical pain. It is also imperative that I stay off alcohol, because it will probably kill me if I drank again. I am a great wife and mom now. I am a productive member of society, and I even work out everyday. Kratom greatly helps my quality of life in many ways. If it is taken away from me all the problems stated above will come back to me because I definitely can not go back on those pharmaceuticals that were dangerous and put me in a fog. I have family that needs me so this ban will affect them negatively as well.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 39-year-old mother and computer science student. This wonderful leaf has helped me greatly. I sometimes have small amounts in a tea and it really helps with my treatment-resistant depression and anxiety as well as pain. I have a history of extreme trauma and have developed PTSD from many negative life experiences such as severe peer bullying, child abuse, the murder of my father and other unfortunate events. I've tried many pharmaceuticals since I was a teen, and I developed a terrible alcohol problem while trying to get some relief from my unbearable feelings of sadness and fear. Thanks to Kratom, I am 18 months sober from alcohol. Kratom helps not only my physical pain, but my mental pain, and the lack of motivation that causes a cycle of more depression and immobility. I can't go back to that life. It is not living at all. I want to be a productive member of society, I want to be a good mother, and I want to be law-abiding. Please do not make me a criminal. I am not a bad person, I am not looking to get high, I am just in pain.

I am a 27 year old male student who has been in the workforce since I was 15. I have no arrests, traffic tickets, or criminal history whatsoever in my life including as a juvenile. I was a 4.0 student and member of my high school Key Club where I logged 100+ hours volunteering. I have been employed full time in the construction industry, as a retail sales manager, and as a solar installer. I own multiple houses and have clear titles on all of them. I am self taught in two foreign languages which I speak with high degrees of fluency. I aspire to continue my college education and ultimately work in the healthcare industry as an ARNP or MD.

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a diagnosed bipolar with an anxiety disorder. I use kratom as a supplement for my depressive symptoms and anxiety as a substitute for prescribed drugs such as xanax, valproate, valium, and lamictal. If this ban takes place I will be faced with a barrage of prescription medications with a myriad of potentially dangerous side effects to manage my condition. The prescription medications I will be required to take are highly addictive and also make me feel 'high' which causes me issues with concentration, work performance, and academic pursuits. With access to kratom, I brew a tea which I drink twice daily and have no issues or need for prescription medications and their side effects. - [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Florida

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm 52 years old. I've been a chronic pain sufferer since the first car accident in 2004. My first pain relief was hydrocodone. I was also injured in a 2nd car accident in 2007 one year after the spinal fusion to repair the damage from the first. I was also physically assaulted in 2009 which threw all the rehabilitation out the window and began my journey in Dilaudid, Morphine and Percocets. I've never abused these drugs but was treated as such. The medical community began pulling the rug and tapering me very quickly due to the heroin overdose epidemic. I was led to Kratom which as been a God send. If the DEA take this away the ONLY choice will be suicide as I've decided I will not live the rest of my life in agony. - [REDACTED]. Rochester, NY

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am a mother of three, with an undergrad degree in Finance and Masters in Education. I have used kratom tea over the past year, after searching for herbal remedies for my mild anxiety. I also run half marathons, and running has proved to be an outlet for stress relief as well. Kratom tea has also helped manage pain with injuries that I have sustained from running, including five knee surgeries to date. I also use other herbal supplements and plants to treat ailments. I feel as though the Government, in particular the DEA, is taking away my rights to live a healthy and happy life. Why do they get to choose what I put in my body if it is causing no harm to others or myself? I feel healthier and happier than I did a year ago. I have never felt "addicted" to this plant or felt as though it was dangerous in any way. I will continue to fight for this freedom, for myself and others, and because I want my children to learn that you fight for what is right. If the ban takes place, I will be forced to find an alternative to aid in managing my anxiety, and most likely it will be more harmful and less effective. I pray the DEA does the right thing, and pursues regulation over prohibition. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED], 34 [REDACTED], PA

For ten years, I have suffered with the consequences of Lupus, which include chronic pain, sleep issues, stress, and fatigue. Medical professionals prescribed several types of medications for these issues including barbiturates, benzodiazepines, hypnotics, muscle relaxants, SSRIs, and strongly suggested I try opiates for pain management. At this encouragement, I sought healthier alternatives. The interactions and side effects from these drugs required constant experimentation, new prescriptions to counter adverse effects, and general discomfort. With a condition as unreasonable as lupus, stability and health become precious resources.

In 2015, I researched Kratom as an alternative. Luckily it has been able to replace the unstable drug regimens strongly suggested and provided reliable results and stability in treatment. It allows me to take several less pills with highly undesirable side effects and varying effects, pills not safe for long term use which is necessary from chronic health conditions. The DEA Kratom ban will upend my effort to manage my chronic symptoms safely. Rather than put my health in a further precarious state, I am inclined continue to live internationally to avoid federal prison for my healthcare needs. Kratom mitigates the majority of these extraneous lupus issues while providing consistent energy. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED], TN (Currently, international resident). Age 28

CONFIDENTIAL

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am a Senior Software Engineer. I have Chronic Fatigue, Fibromyalgia and multiple spinal disorders. I used to be on Vicodin, Gabapentin and other prescription medications for pain management. Kratom helps me manage my pain and fatigue without any need for other medications. Unlike prescription pain medications, kratom allows me to have mental clarity so that I am able and keep my full time job as a software engineer. If kratom is made illegal I will have no choice but to go back to the prescription opioids that aren't as effective and have side effects that affect my logical thinking and make my chronic fatigue worse. I will loose my job because opioids impair my ability to think. Also, due to my constant debilitating pain, I am at risk for opiate overdose.

Kratom has helped me cope with pain, severe fatigue, and anxiety due to chronic illness, including fibromyalgia. I'm [REDACTED] [REDACTED], a 52-year-old mother of two teenagers. I'm no slouch: I've earned a Ph.D. and two master's degrees at Stanford and Cornell. I work as a professor. I was high school valedictorian. I won a host of prestigious scholarships and awards. But illness doesn't spare the high achievers of the world. When I got sick in 2008, and stayed sick, I could barely function.

Several months ago, I tried kratom. I'm a scholar and a skeptic, but I decided it was worth a try. Kratom changed my life. My pain has become far more manageable, and I've regained the energy I need. Yet my mind is clear enough to teach complicated at the university level. The "psychoactive" effects of kratom are limited to a mild mood boost; they don't make me stupid, interfere with reflexes, or otherwise impair me. I no longer fear that I will have to retire early, and I'm able to resume volunteering in my community. My life has become richly meaningful, thanks to my renewed ability to be of service. Not least: I smile and laugh more, and I'm more available to my teenaged boys. I have hope that I can live, not just exist – all thanks to a plant that is closely related to my morning cup of coffee.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I discovered Kratom over a year ago. I am a resident of Alabama and have been very afraid of what the government will do to me. I was a responsible user of Kratom, I have an Associates Degree in Medical Assisting. I have been working in the private sector for over 20 years. With all the tugging and pulling and moving of patients I developed degenerative disc disease, L5 disc is completely destroyed and a crack in my spine right above it. When Alabama decided they knew better what I needed than I did, I did the only thing i could, I suffer. Once in awhile we go out of state just so I can have relief for the weekend or a couple day, otherwise I suffer through it. I will never put my family or home in jeopardy having it here, but it has hurt my ability to work like I used too. I had the ability to make over \$700 a week working while I was taking Kratom. Now I barely can get up to move and make \$100 a week. We are in jeopardy of losing our home, (which is a tiny house) that we built ourselves from a shell of a storage building and our vehicles, we are dependent on my husbands income alone now because the State of Alabama chose to ban this plant that absolutely helped me in every way. I am praying this ban does not go through and it will help get Kratom back in Alabama so it can again let me be able to go back to work full time and be the person I once was while taking it.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 44 year old Catholic School teacher and the Director of Technology for the largest parish in [REDACTED], NY. I live in [REDACTED], NY. I was diagnosed with degenerative disk disease and spinal stenosis in 2000. I was 28 years old and was offered either oxycontin or spinal surgery. With one option I would have become dependant on opiates for life, or go the other route, and risk paralysis. I chose neither, so I chose to suffer. For 11 years I used Advil and Aleve. Advil did liver damage and Aleve caused wicked bleeding ulcers. I gained 100 lbs. I found Kratom through a Google search, for "natural pain relief" and tons of Kratom articles and success stories came up. I read, I researched, I purchased. On December 16, 2011, the chronic pain in my back was eliminated within a half hour of drinking my first cup of Kratom tea. Since then I became active, focused and motivated. I hit

CONFIDENTIAL

the gym again, and I lost the 100 pounds plus more. I am the healthiest I've ever been with a very physically demanding job.

If Kratom were to become illegal, I would be forced to stop it. Considering I am refusing synthetic pills and surgery, and I refuse to break the law, I guess I will end up on disability by the time I turn 45. I'm sure the weight will begin to add on, and I will eventually become homebound. On the days I don't use Kratom, my pain comes back with a vengeance and it would be impossible to continue my career. As of now, I am a healthy productive teacher. Please do not ban Kratom. I do not deserve to suffer for the next 30-40 years. It will destroy my family. I'd lose my home because I would not be able to afford my mortgage. I would lose everything. I refuse to take chemicals. I deserve to choose what I want to put in my body. Thank you for listening.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 39 yr old wife and mother to 4. I have fought severe scoliosis since I was 13 and was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, major depressive disorder, neuropathy and CFS to name a few. I was on meds for 10 yrs including narcotics, and was sleeping my life and my kids life away and was a zombie. I was looking for natural remedies and came across Kratom, I ordered some and never looked back!! In 3 years Kratom has given me my life back. I'm finally able to work after not working for 10 yrs, can run and play with my kids and have my life back!! Please keep Kratom legal and don't take my life away!!

[REDACTED], age 57. Medical pain management for spinal, hip and knee pain from an accident when I was 13 years old. Before and after recent surgery I was on prescription opiates for several months which were absolutely debilitating and habit forming. Since I started drinking an occasional cup of Kratom tea I haven't touched opiates. If Kratom is banned I will have no choice but to go back to opiates.

My name is [REDACTED]. As many others have, I found relief from several ailments using kratom. Ever since I found kratom, my quality of life has went up drastically. I am a 27 year-old who suffers from severe anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, and found solace shortly after discovering kratom 4 years ago. While my legal prescriptions to pharmaceutical SSRIs, painkillers and anxiety medications have somewhat helped, all of them concluded to actual danger to my health and mental state, along with harmful side effects. They did not compare to the safety of using the kratom tea to ease chronic pain, depression, and anxiety. This natural remedy is certainly the optimal solution in this case, as many others have found. I have since been able to rebuild my life, get off harmful prescription medications, and have once again become a positive member to society. The inability to use kratom would certainly regress my lifestyle and do real harm to my well-being. I could not imagine having to go back to a life without kratom.

My name is [REDACTED]. I was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder, RLS and related pain in 2012. I have been prescribed benzodiazepines, SSRI drugs and muscle relaxers. I am currently taking none of those horrible medications. Before my diagnosis I abused alcohol to sleep and deal with the anxiety. Honestly, while I was not anxious and could sleep on these substances, they stole my life. I was depressed, uninterested in anything that gave me joy and stalled out in my Doctoral program. Kratom has replaced all of these dangerous and addictive substances. It is a miracle herb and has given me my life back. I am currently working in Kazakhstan as an Assistant Professor of Media and Communication. I would have not been able to do this without Kratom. I have my Ph.D. and a variety of publications in my field. I do not feel addicted and have gone without the herb for extended periods of time. These periods are miserable not because of any withdrawals, but because my symptoms return.

CONFIDENTIAL

I am sad to report that living here in Kazakhstan, I now feel more free than if I were in the United States. Also, I will not be able to return because I am about to be turned into a criminal. If I do return, then I will either be forced to submit unwillingly to medical treatment that I do not find productive or I will be forced to break the law in order to treat myself as I see fit. This is undue burden--forced to choose between something bad (dangerous medications) and something worse (jail) based on a unilateral decision made by regulatory agencies without any legislation or proof. The Alabama disaster will be repeated, with a 20% spike in overdoses and thousands of new opiate and benzo prescriptions issued. These drugs are the health threat, and this legislation will criminalize those of us avoiding this threat. Kratom is invaluable and it is of great importance to those of us who want to have options beyond what is peddled by big pharmaceutical companies. - [REDACTED], Ph.D. [REDACTED], Kazakhstan & [REDACTED], Tennessee

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 48-year old teacher, mom and grandmother from Oklahoma. I heard about Kratom through an on-line pain support group. I suffer from Depression, Neuropathy, severe anxiety, Sjogren's Syndrome, fibromyalgia and arthritis. I have tried every prescription drug available. I was taking so much medication, I had to take medication, to deal with side effects of medication. I still had so much pain and the same symptoms I had begun with. Nothing worked. I have been dealing with my conditions for over 20 years. Before kratom, I was beginning the process to get on disability. I had no hope and no life. After kratom, I can work, play with my grandchildren, go for a walk and be a contributing member of society. I still have pain and anxiety every day but it is a lot less with kratom. If kratom is taken away I will be on disability, not able to work, not able to play with my grandchildren and I won't have any hope. I don't want addictive pain medicine that makes me feel high and that have other horrible side effects. Kratom is a plant that doesn't have horrible side effects and doesn't make you high. If kratom is taken from me I will wish I were dead because the pain will be so great. I don't want to go back there to that darkness of constant pain. I thought I lived in America where we were free to choose a plant to help our health if we wanted to??

I'm a 61-year old mother of three sons & one daughter--all of whom I have raised to be caring, law-abiding, hardworking, productive citizens of this great country. I have a beautiful 2-year old granddaughter & a grandson on the way. I have a great accounting job at a small company. Thanks to kratom, I rarely, if ever miss a day of work and I'm able to play with my grandchild, take her for walks to the park, and care for her 2 days a week. You see, I also suffer from debilitating knee pain along with severe neck pain from an injury. I use kratom leaf for my pain. I take about 1 teaspoon in the morning & another one at night. It's not a miracle cure, but it works very well for my pain and allows me to live my life fully and give myself to the people I love. I have been using this wonderful plant for a little over a year now. It never leaves me feeling "drugged" like I felt on pain medication. I never need more than my 1 teaspoon and I never crave more. I've never robbed a convenience store to get it and no one has ever found me passed out in my vehicle because of it! I just had my annual physical and I'm in great health. My husband and I bicycle often, sometimes 40 miles on a Saturday. I couldn't do that without kratom. I really believe this plant has helped me get my life back. To ban it not only makes NO sense, it's absolutely ludicrous. Turning many thousands of decent, good & law-abiding people--the many grandmas, grandpas, veterans, thousands of women suffering from endometriosis, & countless others who use this herb to improve their quality of life--into felons is a sad commentary on how low our misguided war on drugs has sunk. Not to mention the hypocrisy of banning a plant that helps so many people get off of the dangerous drugs that this very war is about!! - [REDACTED], MN

I'm a 47 yr old high school teacher and mother of two. I've always been really active on my own and with my kids. As years went by my fatigue and widespread pain got worse until I barely got out of bed. I was diagnosed with osteoarthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and Fibromyalgia. All of this on top of the IBS, displaced cervical discs, degenerated discs, TMJ Disorder, and migraines that I had been being diagnosed with since the 8th grade. We tried the Cymbalta, Lyrica, and gabapentin (Norco for only the worst of

CONFIDENTIAL

days). With each, I got worse instead of better. Within six months I had packed on 60lbs and could barely function through the basic necessities of daily living. I seriously gave thought to removing myself from this planet. I ran across someone who told me about Kratom for pain and fatigue. I researched it and eventually gave it a try. I was amazed at the pain relief, energy boost, anxiety relief, and mood boost that it gave me. I used it to take myself off of one pharmaceutical at a time. It took months and the withdrawals from Cymbalta, Lyrica, and Gabapentin were horrid. The only pharmaceuticals that I still use are Enbrel injections, muscle relaxers, and the very rare Norco. Kratom has given me my life back. I'm a functioning interactive mom and high school teacher again. I gain no "euphoria" or "high" with Kratom. There's no intellectual muddiness, like with opiates or the antidepressants previously prescribed. The only side effect, if I take too much, is nausea. I switch strains each dose to keep my tolerance low, at 3-6 grams. I take it only when I have to, in order to be able to move. I still feel pain 24/7 but it's tolerable most days and I gladly smile again. We MUST keep Kratom legal so that I can keep my life. - [REDACTED] Texas

I'm a 31 year old mother of three. We homeschool and have a small homestead. Kratom is an awesome supplement that really helps with my chronic pain caused by spinal problems. I've been diagnosed with DDD, scoliosis, spondylosis, arthrosis, a fused SI joint, a bulging disc, torn spinal tendons, myositis, fibromyalgia and carpal tunnel. I've been taking kratom for two years now with no adverse effects. It helps with both my pain and the depression caused by chronic pain. I've never gotten any type of high from kratom and I've never had any of the side effects that go along with opioid use such as dizziness, nausea, confusion or respiratory depression. I would much rather use kratom to help my pain and depression than take lots of pills that affect your mood and ability to function. God gave us plants to help with the problems that arrive in life and I would be greatly disappointed if it was taken away. Many people use kratom to help with chronic pain, anxiety, depression, ptsd, etc. Not one death has ever been attributed to kratom alone and it isn't a danger to anyone, even in high doses. It doesn't cause dependency, side effects or any kind of altered state of mind. Please don't take away this herb that is so helpful to so many. Thousands of people have successfully used kratom to permanently stop taking prescription opioids or using street drugs. I would say with today's opioid and street drug abuse epidemic kratom would be very helpful in preventing further overdose when used to wean off of other drugs. It doesn't treat or cure any illnesses but can certainly help with the symptoms of pain, depression or withdrawal. Please don't take it away from us! - [REDACTED], Texas

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 45 years old! I suffer from chronic pain due to DDD, herniated and bulging discs in my neck with bone spurs, dehydrated bulging discs in my lower back with a fracture, fibro, migraines, severe nerve root lesions, and crippling sciatica! When faced with all of this pain I am not able to perform my daily tasks, I end up bedridden for days at a time, and this causes depression! I have been to Pain Mngmnt and I ended up addicted and abusing the meds! I went to the methadone clinic and I ended up addicted and abusing that also! I stopped it all cold turkey and thought I would die! I began drinking heavily to numb the pain! In December 2015 I was introduced to Kratom and there has been no looking back! I have no desire or need for pills or alcohol! My quality of life has improved 110% with Kratom! Just when I seen the light at the end of the tunnel I feel like the rug is being jerked out from under my feet! PLEASE do not take this plant away and force me back to pharmaceuticals and/or alcohol! It will ruin everything that I have worked so hard to repair in my life! - [REDACTED], Ga.

I am 50 years old and use Kratom to ease the pain and fatigue of rheumatoid arthritis and neuropathy. Before Kratom I could barely get through my work week and I would just sleep through the weekends. Since I have been using Kratom I am thriving at work, still have energy after work to exercise and enjoy activities on the weekends. I even earned a Master's Degree because I finally had the energy I needed to study after work and on weekends - [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com [REDACTED]

CONFIDENTIAL

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 43-year old male from Wyoming. In 2009 I suffered an injury at work. I have a herniated disc in my neck that causes me daily headaches, problems with my vision, painful muscle spasms in my neck, head, back, and shoulder. For 6 years I took harsh and addictive prescription painkillers and muscle relaxers. This year I was fortunate enough to find kratom. I have not had one sick day from work since starting to take kratom.

I can't imagine going back to life without kratom. The thought makes me tearful and scared. Please don't take kratom away from me! My professional career and home life will suffer again for sure!
[REDACTED] from Wyoming

[REDACTED], 30, [REDACTED], TX

I first learned of Kratom in 2013. I was an alcoholic and in a very difficult time in my life. I literally used Kratom to end my addiction to alcohol over several months. It provided immediate relief from my cravings and put me in a state where I was more motivated to focus on doing things positive for myself. I have continued using it regularly to this day, on a daily basis. In 2015 I suffered a back and leg injury that caused chronic inflammation and pain. I had no health insurance. To this day I still maintain a highly active and productive lifestyle thanks to this natural compound. I can manage my pain and stay in a great positive mood at my 60+ hour/week job with no prescription medications or abuse of any other substances like alcohol. Kratom has changed my life literally. I have recommended it to friends and family, some who have adopted it in their lives with great enthusiasm. For me, Kratom is primarily a safe and highly effective pain reliever and aid for any all forms of fatigue.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 34 years old. My husband and I have been married 11 years and we have a 9 year old son. My husband is one of the most amazing people I have ever met. He holds multiple advanced degrees in Physics, Education, and Engineering. He plays 5 instruments, writes music and poetry, has a black belt in Jujitsu, builds furniture, blows glass, makes pottery, loves camping and hiking, and can fix my car. Seven years ago he began suffering from muscle spasms and debilitating migraines. After several MRIs, the doctors found that due to sports injuries sustained as a teen, my husband's shoulder blade and upper spine are wrapped in a mass of scar tissue that can not be operated on. He spent the next 3 years in physical therapy, having injections, and prescribed every painkiller, muscle relaxer and pill his doctors thought might help. Although the medications alleviated pain, they left him just a shadow of his former self. He could not work or participate in activities he enjoyed because his medications made him disoriented and dazed. He became depressed, slept most of the day, lost interest in family, and we ended up in marriage counseling. However 4 years ago a family friend suggested my husband try Kratom and it literally changed our lives. Today along with Kratom, he is prescribed only one medication to prevent migraines and one muscle relaxer that he takes occasionally if he has muscle spasms from too much physical activity. He no longer has to have injections or physical therapy. He works full-time, has been able to return to his hobbies, and even coaches our son's little-league team. Kratom gave my husband his life back and in turn gave me back my husband and my son his father.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 35 years old and live in [REDACTED], Oregon. I am a [REDACTED] at the Department of Human Services. I have used kratom for Restless Legs Syndrome and Irritable Bowel Syndrome since 2008. Before finding kratom I tried every prescription drug that is on the market for both of my chronic conditions. Every single medicine I tried was ineffective, or the side effects were so bad I was unable to continue treatment. In fact, the anti-Parkinson's medication my doctor prescribed for my Restless Legs Syndrome actually made my symptoms worse (this is a common side effect called "augmentation").

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a law-abiding citizen (I had to pass a background check to be employed at my current job), and I respect the law greatly, and one of the main reasons I chose kratom (like the hundreds of other people I have talked to in the kratom community), is because it is LEGAL, and because it does not alter who I am as a person like some of the medications I used to take for my chronic health conditions. It does not impair me, alter my thinking or behavior, or affect my judgment.

The DEA may think it's as simple as choosing not to use kratom anymore if the ban goes into effect. But I have two serious chronic illnesses that have been successfully managed with kratom for more than 8 years now. I can sleep at night and not crash my car when I'm driving because an RLS flare up happens all of a sudden, because my RLS is helped greatly by kratom. I can focus at work because my RLS symptoms are under control. I can not wake up every morning sick to my stomach and throw up every day before I go to work, because my Irritable Bowel Syndrome disappears completely when I take kratom.

What does the DEA expect us to do? They have put us between a rock and a hard place. Most kratom users respect the law like I do, and are not criminals. We don't abuse illegal drugs, most of us don't even drink alcohol or use other prescription drugs. We are moral, ethical people by and large. But we also have chronic illnesses that require treatment, and kratom is the only thing we have found that works. It has given us our lives back. That is why you will find such passion among us. We are literally fighting for our lives.

I am a 54 yr old wife, mother of 4 and grandma to 3. Raised in an abusive home, I went on to an abusive relationship that lasted 4 very long years. I have suffered 31 breaks, including multiple facial trauma, cervical & spinal fractures, seizures, tremors, was in a coma for 9 days from a beating and hospitalized for several days from being stabbed repeatedly. As a result, I had migraines that could not be treated successfully, nerve damage that affects my arms and hands which forced me to leave my job as a hair stylist, was diagnosed with fibro, CFS, a/r. Fifteen years ago I was rear ended by a large van and pushed into oncoming traffic that put me in therapy for over a year, I never re-gained all my movement or strength and added to my chronic pain. I went from Dr to Dr, to several specialists and each told me there was no hope for recovery and all they could do was try to manage my pain. I have been on Fentanyl, oxycontin, Methotrexate, percocet, percodine, codeine, Tylenol 3, Flexeral, Antivert, Dilantin, Cymbalta, Lyrica and others plus multiple shots of cortizone, steroids and nerve blocks in an effort to relieve my pain. None of them really worked; they either left me sleepy, unable to concentrate, feeling "out of myself" or just plain made me sick. To add insult to injury, I also found myself on other Rx's to combat the side effects of high blood pressure, nausea, IBS, body rash, mouth blisters, blurry vision and more caused by the Rx's meant to help. Then, about 4 years ago I found kratom. To be honest, I didn't expect much but I did want to get off ALL the meds or at least as many as possible. Kratom has changed my life; all by itself. I am clean of any Rx drugs and rely solely on Kratom now and even though I am not 100% pain free, I am 100% chemical free and that alone thrills me. The best part of Kratom is that I control my dosage, how much and when I take it and it is affordable--even though it is not covered by insurance. If Kratom becomes illegal, my life is over. I am happy now, I can sleep almost through the night; most nights anyway and even though I still have to space out my activities, at least now I can still consider going places. Before Kratom, I felt like a home bound prisoner. Please do not take away my only lifeline to family, friends and a future.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 48 year old mom of 6. I used to work in a RCFE and in schools as well as at the juvenile hall! I suffered Herniated discs in lumbar and cervical spine! I also was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome and had the surgery to release the nerves in both hands as well as a rotator cuff surgery. I am unable to do the work I used to do and when taking prescription opioids I developed high blood pressure and other unwanted side effects. Kratom has made it so I have energy and very little pain! I can keep my house clean again and keep up with my two younger children one 13,

CONFIDENTIAL

and the other 10. I don't have to stay in bed any longer during the day and I can be a better parent and spouse to help my husband. I am afraid without Kratom and the vitamins I take, I will go back to the excruciating pain I was in before that opiates don't take care of because you start needing more for them to work! I want to keep being a good Mom and also get a job again and Kratom gave me that hope again! Please don't take this hope away from me and the countless others that take it! I know they are saying negative things about Kratom but I know I have found none of those things to be true. The benefits far outweigh the risks. My blood pressure is now under control and I can live again for years I felt like a useless lump of pain laying in a bed waiting to die and I no longer feel that way. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED], CA

I am a 43 year old woman who was a teller during a bank robbery in 1999. Since that incident, I have suffered extreme anxiety, including panic attacks, and have had too many occasions of being unable to leave my home due to pure terror at the thought of coming into contact with others. I had received prescriptions for Xanax and Seroquel, but hated the numbness and missing days both caused in me. After being introduced to Kratom in tea form (by a very intuitive friend) approximately five (5) years ago, these attacks and bad days are down to maybe two or three a year, rather than being a weekly occurrence. As an additional 'bonus' during this same time period, I have noticed a huge reduction in the pain from menstrual cramps and associated migraines. I fear that if this plant is banned, I will revert to my previous state of pain and fear, and I would like to avoid this at all costs. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], FL

I am a 57 year old woman with no kids, who is the sole caretaker of my 87 yr old widowed mom. I was diagnosed at 13 w/double curve scoliosis but since we were Jehovahs Witnesses, bloodless surgery was out of the question. The pain, as I age, takes my breath away. I'm on disability because the damage being done to my nerves from the decompressing vertebrae is amazing! Doctors prescribed vicodin and oxycodone for pain. 13 years of taking it and then they couldn't give me oxycodone anymore so the started making me take oxymorphone. It was the only thing that they would prescribe because I'd gotten used to such a huge opiate load. Last Feb 2016, I'd had enough of driving an hour each way to the pain clinic to pee in a jar. Enough of the stigma and feeling like a criminal for being on pain meds. I had read about the herb KRATOM and decided to try it. I'm not going to sugarcoat it. Cold turkey was like living in a Hyronomous Bosch painting but I did it with the help of Kratom! I've been off ALL pain meds since, and using Kratom when the pain takes my breath away. I have my life back. I am of use to society and can care for my mom and home, where before I'd just lie in bed all day, and count pills, wondering how I was going to make them last because there were never enough. Pain varies day to day. What works one day might not be enough the next. Or too much! I knew I had to stop. KRATOM gave me my life back. PLEASE DON'T LET THIS HERB BE BANNED!! It would be a mistake unless the aim is to have the pharms get all opiate users addicted to another drug. I only have to use Kratom a few times a week. Please! Just this once? Let it NOT be about the money for the Pharms? Please?

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a mother to a blended family with eight children, a grandma to four little ones, a wife, and a full time college student. I also have lupus and degenerative joint and disc disease. I was under a doctor's care for several years, but seemed to just get sicker and sicker. I was to the point I could barely walk, I certainly could not run and play with my children. I was merely dragging myself through the days, trying to make it for my kids--not living, just surviving. As my pain level rose, so did my tolerance for the medications I was prescribed. First it was oxycodone and xanax, then dilaudid and klonopin. But I was not getting any better. If anything I was getting worse. Then I realized I was dependent on the medications, and decided to self-withdraw, with only my husband's and children's support. My husband even tried to convince me that it would be okay to use a suboxone program, and was even willing to take me out of state if necessary, but I refused. I had trusted the medical system and it had failed me. I knew I had to do this on my own. After 14 days of hell that I would wish on no one, I

CONFIDENTIAL

was free of the dependence on the medications, but back to square one with my pain, fatigue, and overall malaise. I began researching for natural alternatives to improve my health and quality of life. That is how I came upon kratom. I decided I had nothing to lose, it was worth a shot. From my first cup of tea made from this precious plant, my life began to improve. I found I could move again, and not that fake energy you get from pharmaceutical painkillers. I slowly started to get stronger, healthier. I could play with my kids again. I could work in the yard. My husband still tried to baby me a bit, but as I got stronger physically, I got stronger mentally and emotionally, and soon he had his tough little woman back. Everything has changed. I have a better life overall. I tossed out the microwave, cook all our food from scratch, try to avoid processed foods (as much as we can afford!), I stopped taking all over the counter medicines, and now only consume safe herbal remedies and alternative medicines that come from nature! God truly has provided us with all that we need; we just have to be willing to take the time and patience to find it! My only bad habit really remaining is that I still smoke, but I went from three packs of mainstream raunchy tobacco to less than a pack of organic tobacco cigarettes a day, and I hope to give those up one day as well. I have had four grandchildren born in this time period since I discovered the benefits of kratom. My oldest two grandchildren are almost two years old (yes, both, one from each oldest grown child!), and they both think Grandma can do anything! I never tire of chasing them through the house, taking them out to swing, or having them help me in the garden. If we go out as a family, I am the one who carries them piggy-back for hours--they are my best little friends! My youngest children are six year old twin boys, and it is the same with them. We were out last weekend playing freeze tag, jumping over their toys in the yard, shrieking and running for base like nobody's business. Please, please, I do not often beg, if ever. But I am damned well begging now. Please do not take this away from me, or from them. I cannot bear the thought of my little ones or my grandbabies reaching for me and me having to tell them Grandma or Moma cannot pick them up. That is absolutely more than I can bear. I do not want to ever let them down. My older children are beginning to forget those dark years of sickness and doctors' offices and Moma laying in bed, exhausted, or crying; it has already begun to fade, and they believe they can count on me for everything once more. My little boys have no memory of that sad, sick broken woman, and my grandbabies never had to meet her, ever! Please, don't re-introduce her now. Thank you.

I am 45 years old and a 27 year veteran of the military. I suffer from chronic back pain (Vertebrae Degeneration). I also suffer from PTSD. I was on an Opioid painkiller for the chronic pain. About 8 months ago I was searching for a natural alternative to RX pain medicine. I found Kratom and it has worked wonders for me. I have not taken a pain pill since. Before the kratom it was hard to function due to the intense pain, now I can do almost anything with very little pain. After taking the Kratom for a while I noticed the effects of my PTSD were noticeably less. I do not have the anxiety like I use to and my sleep is so much better. I pray they do not ban Kratom. I do NOT want to go back to the chronic pain I suffered and I do not want to go back onto pain medication. I am leading an active life and my quality of life is much better with the Kratom. I have also introduced Kratom to many veteran friends of mine and it has also helped them tremendously! So please keep Kratom legal for those of us who need it.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm 36 years old, a father of two and one on the way. I am the sole provider for my family.

I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease back in February 2015 after having a large section of my colon surgically removed. In the months leading up to this I was in excruciating pain because my intestines were completely blocked from inflammation caused by what I later learned was crohn's disease.

I still have frequent flare ups that cause me a lot of pain and discomfort. I am prescribed narcotic painkillers to help cope with that. I take them regretfully, when I do take them. I understand the damage they do to the liver with all the acetaminophen. They are highly addictive, I can't focus when I take them and they make you feel miserable.

CONFIDENTIAL

When I realized that I was actually becoming dependent on prescription painkillers, that's when I started looking for an alternative. I lost a brother to an overdose on prescription pain pills, I've lost several friends as well. We're not talking about your everyday addict either. I'm talking about good hardworking people that had a legit reason for taking the very medications that cost them their lives.

Again, regretfully I still take the pills I'm prescribed when I have a bad flare up. The only reason for that is the cost. I have insurance, so it's a lot cheaper to get a prescription under my insurance than it is to buy Kratom but for someone without insurance, it would be a lot cheaper for them to buy Kratom.

Money aside, my plan was/is to get off the prescription medication all together with Kratom. In the meantime, it has allowed me to take the pain pills a lot less frequently and I have been able to transition from pain pills to Kratom without any side effects. I'm not an addict, never have been, I have to give Kratom a lot of credit there. Without having this amazing plant to fall back on.... who knows. I like to think I'm stronger than that but so was my brother.

Aside from the pain, Kratom has also helped with slowing down spasms in my intestines. When I have these spasms, you can see my abdomen contracting, Kratom seems to slow that down within 20 or 30 minutes after a glass of Kratom tea. It also helps with regularity, I hate to go here, but it's an important issue and I think this could really help a lot of people.

My father has also benefited tremendously from Kratom. He is 76 years old and has been on pain pills for about 9 years! Well.... not anymore. He has not had a pain pill in over a month and his withdrawal symptoms have been almost non-existent. Before we found Kratom, you couldn't even get him out of bed if he didn't have his pain pills. The symptoms were so bad for him, I couldn't bear watching him go through it! Vomiting, diarrhea, sweats, nausea and then there's the depression! Wow, it was bad. Not anymore. He actually asked me to pick him up and bring him to buy a car!! He hasn't been out of the house in months, let alone had a desire to drive anywhere or do anything. I have a few other testimonials that I could share with you but for one, they're not mine to tell and two, I am a responsible adult with a family to provide for and a job to go to early in the morning and yet, here I am sitting here at midnight writing this letter to plead with you to help us fight for this amazing tea leaf that provides miraculous relief & benefits for myself and countless others.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 34 years old. I am a successful business owner and a regular, tax-paying citizen with a great family. Through no fault of my own, I suffered a bad accident and live with the pain every day. I took narcotics for years and had to stop because I realized that they were doing much more harm than good. My family said that I was a different person, and I was. I found Kratom a year ago and it was like a curtain was lifted. It is not a cure for anything, but it's indispensable for me. It simply makes life more manageable for me with less side effects than narcotics. What people who have never had chronic pain before don't understand, is that taking nothing is not an option. If this ban goes through I will have to choose between going back to dangerous pills, living my life in pain again, or keep taking kratom and be labeled a criminal. Just when I finally feel like my life is under control and I am happy again, the very people who are supposed to protect my rights are stripping them from me. I honestly don't feel free anymore. All this ban will do is cause people who have suffered all their lives to suffer even more. People will die because of this, and it is inhumane and immoral. What we need is more information and regulation. Please do not take this choice away from us.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 37 year old and I suffer from sacroiliac dysfunction, degenerative disc disease and have two torn annular fibers in my lower back. The doctors currently can do nothing to heal me and have told me directly that the best they can do for me is keep me "comfortable" by prescribing medication. The surgery that they could do is only 40% effective and could potentially lead to more pain not less. I've had this pain for 4 years now and it's sad to know that it is something I will deal

CONFIDENTIAL

with all my life. Kratom allows me to avoid being a haze all the time due to the Vicodin/tramadol/Lortab and other meds I was prescribed. I can function again. I find that kratom is more effective than any of those pills. If the ban goes through I will be forced to return again to the pain doctors and to have painful injections in my spine. I don't believe they help but they appease the pain doctor so that he feels he is at least trying to take steps outside of just prescribing meds. Truth is they hurt like hell and don't work and sometimes actually do more harm than good as they make me aggressive and I am in pain for weeks after getting them. I will have a life of addiction and pain doctors in my future if this ban goes through.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 31 years old and have been using kratom daily for the past few years. I have struggled with depression and anxiety for most of my life, and am recovering from past traumatic experiences. I take prescription medication for my symptoms. Though the medication does help somewhat, I remain symptomatic, and kratom is the only thing that has made me feel truly happy and optimistic. It has helped me to become more productive and socially engaged. I was miserable for years prior to incorporating kratom into my lifestyle, and since I began preparing this herbal tea on a daily basis, I have felt happier and more fulfilled than I have in a long time. The great thing about kratom is that it makes you feel good enough to make you want to do OTHER things that make you feel good, like live a full life without fear, worry, self-doubt, misery, or regret. By becoming more socially engaged and productive, depressive symptoms become even less likely. Without kratom, I will be in very real danger of resuming past self-anaesthetizing behavior, including excessive drinking. Obviously, alcohol consumption is NOT conducive to productivity, and problem drinking is not conducive to positive social engagement. I do not wish to return to those dark days, but in the absence of a reliable substitute to treat my symptoms, I fear I will have no choice. I fear I will become chemically dependent again, my life will fall apart, and my health will fail, just as it happened before. I am a college-educated professional trying to start my own business, and I have served my country in the Peace Corps. I am generally a good, kind, responsible person, who is simply in pain. I had limited options for properly dealing with this pain, especially during times when I could not afford health insurance. Even when I can, prescription meds can only do so much. Discovering kratom was nothing short of miraculous to me. After so much trial and error, I found a sustainable way to manage my symptoms, and just as I get my life together, that miracle is being taken away as a result of misinformation. Kratom is not a dangerous drug. It is an incredibly helpful herb with enormous potential to help people with chronic pain, whether physical or mental, live a happier, healthier, better life. Please don't take this miracle away from me and turn me into a criminal with this ban. Kratom gave me my life back, as it has for so many others. For that, it is something to be celebrated, not banned.

My Name is [REDACTED], I am 36 years old, a father of two and one on the way. I've been taking Kratom for over 6 months now. It helps tremendously in relieving the pain associated with crohn's disease. As the pattern goes, I'm prescribed percocet to help manage that pain but I've found that Kratom is a much better alternative.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a veteran of foreign wars, have been employed in the engineering field for 37 years, and now retired at age 65. My aging process has brought on chronic arteritis - causing me to have to rely on aspirin and other NSAID pain medications related to causing heart problems and or gastric problems if taken for too long. While looking for alternative pain medication, I ran across Kratom. Kratom has given me the ability to function most of the day, basically pain free while taking care of the day's work/tasks. Taking the right amount of Kratom to relieve the pain has an effect of taking approximately (2) cups of coffee, and that's it! Would hate to have to revert to the more dangerous pain medications!

[REDACTED] TESTIMONY - I am the face of a chronic pain sufferer. In 2001 I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia and immediately placed on the pharmaceutical superhighway. With each new side effect of

CONFIDENTIAL

a previously prescribed drug, I was given yet another drug to take. After being on the strongest pain med available (fentanyl patch) along with antidepressants, muscle relaxants, and various other meds I had finally had enough. No person should have to live their life around the schedule of taking 15 different medications! So I decided to go a more holistic route and discovered a miracle herb called Kratom. With this wonderful plant I was able to wean off many of the prescriptions, therefore reducing the many side effects of those drugs. In addition, my quality of life improved tremendously. I was able to get out of bed, take a shower, go to the grocery store, cook dinner and visit with family and friends. I also no longer had to depend on alcohol to self medicate what pain the pharmaceutical drugs didn't touch. Using this God given natural medication allowed me to focus again on something other than my pain. It gave me energy where before I had none. And I began to live life again. Now the government intends to ban Kratom turning all those benefiting from its healing powers into criminals overnight! Well I say no more! Where are my unalienable rights that are guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence upon which the government is supposed to protect? Why don't I have the right to pursue happiness? Where is my liberty, my FREEDOM TO CHOOSE? It should be illegal to criminalize nature! We Americans should not be mere pawns in the DEA and big pharma's game of chess. Many chronic pain sufferers will have no choice but to be bedridden again. Many will go back to being drug addicts as well. Not by choice, but by necessity. If Kratom does indeed become illegal, some of us will not even survive. I know of many military vets whose lives have been saved due to Kratom. Those who fought for our freedom, why is our government now taking away theirs? And mine. I don't want to go back to that place, that place of being a non-functioning, unproductive, bedridden sick person, instead of the vibrant person I've become thanks to Kratom. It is not a road I want to go down again. When the greed of our government overrules quality of life there is no justice and all is lost. When you can't live life free from pain by using what nature provides, so others can line their own pockets, there is no freedom, only pain.

My name is [REDACTED], and I'd like to share a little bit about the role kratom plays in my life. I am a 44 year old educator for a world renowned science institution, an artist, and a father and husband. I consider myself to be an upstanding citizen and a positive contributor to our society. For the past 25 years I have struggled with a variety of mental illnesses including Major depression, Generalized anxiety disorder, Panic disorder without agoraphobia, and alcohol abuse disorder. The symptoms of these conditions are sometimes debilitating. Even on a good day I am operating at 40% of my potential capacity. Through some miracle, I have managed my life despite these challenges but, once again, not to the best of my ability. I discovered kratom 2 years ago, and the transformation has been almost unbelievable. I have tried so many different medications. Antidepressants, anxiolytics, mood stabilizers and antiepileptics. I have taken part in CBT, MBCBT, DBT, group therapies, and twelve step programs. All of these traditional therapies have been effective in one way or another but none alone, or in combination has provided complete relief, and the medications come with assorted side effects that are, sometimes, worse than the conditions they are meant to treat. I turned to alcohol for temporary relief and quickly descended into active alcoholism. After hospitalization and rehab, I have managed to achieve and maintain sobriety for 7 years but that comes with challenges of its own. Kratom, a simple leaf from southeast asia, has completely changed the quality of my life. Not only has it caused almost complete abatement of my symptoms (I'd put my function at 90% as of this moment, it is after all not a complete panacea) but promoted wellness in other areas of my life too numerous to detail here. I am a better father and a better husband, a better teacher, a better contributor to society as a result of this leaf and, finally, I have found contentment that I once thought impossible. All of these changes have come with nearly zero unwanted side effects. I consider this a gift from god, this leaf. Created as a benevolent aid to a life of wellness. It is no mystery to me that Buddhists consider this plant sacred and use it as an aid themselves. To take this gift from we Americans who through its assistance have found broken lives and bodies made whole again would be, in my opinion, an act of violence against god and nature. A destructive act that would cause irreparable harm to those who use this botanical. The results would be a return to sickness, addiction, and detrimental effects on the economy through loss of jobs and income and the added strain on the American health care system. People will die as a result of the DEA's rash and unconstitutional actions.

CONFIDENTIAL

This my perspective and this is my story. I thank you for listening and beg you to consider these words and those of the others who join me in sharing them. May god have mercy on our souls.

Hello, my name is [REDACTED]. I'm 49 years old, and have been drinking Kratom for 6 years. I spent all of my career with the exception of the last 5 years, working as an automotive painter. I'm currently an internationally published commercial photographer, having had my images published in The Grammy's Program, NBA Finals Program, Major League Baseball All-Star Game Program, and Paula Deen Magazine, just to name a few. Having crawled around on my knees on concrete floors in body shops for the better part of 30 years, and the last 5 years, spending long days on my feet and carrying heavy gear all day, I now suffer from chronic knee and lower back pain. The pain is so intense that standing up in the middle of the night to walk the bathroom is excruciating. My doctor has tried prescribing different mild pain relievers (I won't take the heavy narcotics, because I refuse to get addicted to them), and nothing has even remotely helped. Then I was introduced to Kratom Tea by a friend who was in a similar situation due to intense pain. Since that evening, my life has been changed. Now I can exercise again, run with my dogs at the park, ride my bicycle, bowl, and an entire host of other things that I thought I would never be able to enjoy again!! I'm even going out with my camera to shoot landscapes and bands, just for fun. I'm so excited because photography has been my passion since the 8th grade, but the intense pain, turned into a miserable day at work! Kratom Tea has saved my life, and made it a life worth "living" again!!!

Hundreds of thousands of people are experiencing this every day due to this amazing plant, with no side effects. Please don't take that away from us. There's nothing wrong with Kratom, and there's no reason Kratom cannot exist alongside the poisons provided by pharmaceutical companies. A lot of good people will suffer, and those fighting addiction using Kratom may even die, and for what? So big companies get richer than they already are? When do "We the People" start to matter again?!! How much money is enough? It's time for someone to step up and tell the pharmaceutical companies that they refuse to be bought out, and what they want isn't good for the people of our great nation. Everyone on these pages are begging you to "Please stop this ridiculous ban on Kratom!!" Our quality of life is in your hands, don't let us down!!!!

[REDACTED] in Florida

Hello, my name is [REDACTED]. I'm 49 years old and have been taking Kratom for 2 years. I broke my back when I was 19 years old. Two back surgeries. I managed without anything for about 10 years and then felt I needed something to deal with the pain. I went back to orthopedic and they suggested another surgery. I couldn't deal with another surgery. They sent me to their pain management doctor. I really didn't know what I was getting into but trusted the doctor had my best interest. Was prescribed hydrocodone. I said wow, I think I can deal with the pain now. Well like a lot of people, all the doctor gave me was an addiction that would define the next 15 years of my life. In the end I turned into an animal eventually turned to heroin. Then went to treatment inpatient. Detoxed but still couldn't deal with the pain and turned back to pain pills. I then found suboxone, thought this was the answer. Just another trap. Finally found Kratom! I was able to get off the suboxone and I take a total of 2 teaspoons a day of Kratom. My life is totally transformed. Now you're trying to take that away from me. I really don't know what I'm going to do if this happens. I can't go back to that other life, I will die for sure. Anything that can keep Kratom available I am all in!! I was able to save a marriage of 28 years, I have two grown children and hope to see my grandchildren grow up. Kratom works!!

Hello my name is [REDACTED] and after a serious car accident I was prescribed Vicodin. It didn't take long to go from 2 a day to 2 an hour. Once my doctor stopped prescribing them to me, I was hooked and needed to continue my habit. I switched to buying them illegally for two years. I lost everything because the pills were my only focus. Not family, not work, not anything. When I finally decided to kick the habit, I was told

CONFIDENTIAL

about kratom. I believe without Kratom, I would be dead right now. It not only manages the constant pain I still have because of my accident, but I am no longer a slave to the pills.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 39 years old. I am a mother of two. I teach martial arts and am currently in a program to receive my certification in personal training. I love playing sports and am extremely athletic. In the past two years I have had to have three surgeries from injuries I have sustained from my extremely active lifestyle. As a result of my many injuries, I have arthritis and bones spurs in my knees. I wake up every morning barely able to walk. I drink my kratom tea in the morning and I am able to walk pain free and am able to live the quality of life we all deserve. I have no desire to be prescribed pain medication.

My name is [REDACTED] and this is how kratom has changed my life. In 2008 at the age of 30 I was told I had a giant Tarlov cyst. I had a spinal surgery to try to drain my cyst that was on my spine in my sacral area, this did not work and I developed a spinal fluid leak. Again I went for surgery to stop the leaking, again no luck. I then was transferred to a third surgery three hours away. This did fix my leaking but unfortunately I had leaked too long and ended up with another very painful condition called Adhesive Arachnoiditis. This condition causes me pain to the point where I can't sit on my tailbone very long at all, which left me in bed almost 24/7. I was prescribed fentanyl and was miserable on it for 7 yrs. I was foggy and not aware of what I was doing while on that medicine. I met a special lady who told me about Kratom and what good it was doing for her. I started slow and read a lot. I found myself, that it was changing so many lives of my friends. I too became brave enough to attempt to come off the fentanyl. Today one year later I'm off fentanyl and out of bed. I'm clear minded and actually have times that I'm out of bed by 50% out of my day. I'm more stable than I have been in eight years. PLEASE Don't make kratom a schedule 1 herb. I would like to keep getting the most out of life naturally. Thanks for reading [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm 31 years old. I've been a regular consumer of Kratom for about a year and a half now. My main reason for using the plant is to combat consistent depression that has been affecting me for much of my adult life. I also have been addicted to opiates in the past (from about 2006-2015 off an on) and Kratom helped me get off of them and live a normal life. I do not have cravings for opiates, and it provides me with a little bit of energy, mood-lift, and motivation--much in the same way coffee does, without the edge. I make tea out of the powdered leaves. I do not get "high" off of Kratom. I am an average working class American who uses an herbal supplement because it helps me with very few side effects. Antidepressants have not helped me. If this is taken away from me, I am extremely worried about my mental health, in addition to the possibility I might relapse back into opiate addiction. I am extremely upset that I have to justify my usage of tea to my government, especially when the reasoning was factually skewed and done without public comment or research. It feels like a violation of my god-given right to help myself live a normal productive life, with a plant that has shown to be extremely effective and safe.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], NC

I am a 32-year-old female who works as an Assistant Professor at a state university. About a year ago, I was crossing the street as a pedestrian and was struck by a car travelling approximately 25 miles per hour. The accident resulted in serious soft tissue damage to my knees and back, including several herniated discs in my cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine. The cervical disc herniations caused compression of my spinal nerves in the neck area. These injuries resulted in weakness, numbness, and sometimes debilitating bouts of pain. My back pain has been so significant as to force me to spend huge portions of my life on the couch and to prevent me from eating normally due to the excruciating pain associated with even minor movements such as opening and closing the jaw. Without forming an addiction, I have used kratom as an effective pain treatment for these symptoms, one that is less harmful,

CONFIDENTIAL

in a number of dimensions, than the prescription pain medication I have also been intermittently prescribed. I am concerned that this step by the DEA would either lead to more individuals with reduced quality of life due to chronic and significant pain or to reduced quality of life due to addiction to prescription pain medication. In the latter case, people also risk side effects, including death, associated with prescription pain medication as well as the social and medical consequences associated with maintaining an addiction.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 58 year old male. Kratom stopped me from drinking. I got much healthier with kratom. Now I have to go back to alcohol which is much worse. The DEA's decision will cause the deaths of thousands and will cause great human suffering.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a married father of three school age children. I am former NYC firefighter. I am a collapse survivor of both towers on 9/11/01. I suffer from PTSD due to my experiences and efforts on 9/11 and during the rescue and recovery in the aftermath. I have been prescribed anti anxiety and anti depression medications which I do not feel are helpful. I also DO NOT like to take prescription meds of this or ANY type. I DO NOT take illegal substances or drugs. I DO NOT drink alcohol. I DO NOT seek any type of "high or euphoria". That is NOT what Kratom is. That is NOT what Kratom does. I use Kratom as a tea or with orange juice. I find it helps relieve PTSD symptoms. It does not erase these extreme symptoms but helps to make them more manageable and less debilitating and this helps me to lead a life that is more manageable and fulfilling. The proposed Kratom ban is an unfair rush to judgement based on a total mischaracterization and misunderstanding of this natural herbal supplement that is being used to help so many people. A Ban like this will surely make my life much more difficult and my daily struggle to manage symptoms much more debilitating. My life will certainly become infinitely more difficult. Why would the DEA or the Government rush to judgement on this based on what can only be described as a lack of information and research. This is an unjustifiable overreach and an unfair rush to judgment that will surely impact many good people in a very drastic and negative way. Good people are trying very hard to manage their illnesses and conditions and this Kratom Ban will surely increase their suffering. Isn't that exactly the opposite of what the mission should be? Please take a closer look at this before letting this ban go into effect.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I am a 30 year old mother of 2. I suffer from chronic back pain due to DDD and sciatica, anxiety and depression. I began consuming kratom on day 7 of opiate withdrawal from Dr prescribed opiates. When they stopped working and I asked for something different I was immediately cut off and fired as a patient. He has since quit practicing. I found kratom and it helped me get through the worse of the withdrawals. I continue to use it for my many diagnoses. I have found a quality of life I never knew existed. I am not high. I am not impaired. I am terrified of going back to opiates, anti anxiety meds and antidepressants. I will likely be bed ridden most days with a feeling of dread for each day. My anxiety was debilitating even on benzos .What will become of my children mother? What will become of me?

My name is [REDACTED] and I have used kratom for anxiety, depression, and fibromyalgia. It has eased my issues in a natural way without the need of prescription drugs which cause even worse issues in themselves! We deserve a natural option to treat our health issues. Please help keep kratom legal and help the states where it's been banned make it legal again !

My name is [REDACTED], I am a mother, wife and a systems engineer. I have worked since college (a Bachelors in Computer Science) and have never been a burden on anyone. I don't smoke or drink, nor have i ever done illicit drugs and never looked for a high or any kind of euphoria. I suffer from painful injuries sustained from my days riding horses and competing in jumping events. I also fell down some

CONFIDENTIAL

hardwood stairs when i was pregnant, and to save my baby, i took the brunt of the impact in my back. I have also suffered PTSD and depression from a childhood trauma. I have taken regular pharmaceuticals prescribed to me without much effect, and with terrible side-effects. I discovered Kratom 3 years ago via a herbalist and I have never looked back since. This plant has given me back my quality of life that every person has a right to live. This proposed ban is cutting a lifeline for so many people, this does not suggest an agency working for the benefit of the people, but very much against them.

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm an award-winning author and a grandmother. I am also bipolar, so using common pharmaceuticals is not an option for me. Any prescription med that warns of mood changes or suicidal thoughts is like kryptonite and dangerous for me, so I must use alternative medicines for most things. I deal with chronic pain from fibromyalgia and a back injury, and opiates are not an option, either. Kratom has been a godsend! Not only does it help with the chronic pain, it helps me sleep and helps me moderate my moods. Placing Kratom on the Schedule 1 list will diminish the quality of my life by an order of magnitude. Please, reconsider and don't make me into a criminal for using a substance that God made.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I am a 36 year old male from Kansas. 10 years ago I had a major knee operation which did not go well and never healed properly. During this span of knee surgeries, doctors gave me thousands of painkillers without a 2nd thought. I became addicted, to the point where i was buying them on the street once i was cut off. The day i found Kratom was a beautiful day and allowed me to turn my life around. On top of that, my sister was an even worse case and Kratom truly saved her life. Do not let them stomp on our liberties, this plant should be revered, not banned. It saves lives and allowed my family to go back to normalcy.

My name is [REDACTED] and I suffer from chronic Lyme disease. Before kratom I was in pain all the time. Kratom gave me the ability to start living my life again. Prescription pain medicine didn't even help the pain. If kratom is banned I don't know how I will make it sometimes the pain is unbearable. I don't want to feel like that again.

My name is [REDACTED]. Herniated & ruptured discs, degenerative disc disease, unsuccessful surgeries, Fibromyalgia, anxieties and depression brought on by these illnesses, opiates and other prescription drugs, and the guilt and failure I feel as a mother have all robbed me of any quality of life for the past 20 yrs. Earlier this year I was blessed to have found Kratom. With Kratom I have been able to stop all medications. I am able to live free of my round the clock pain, able to know what sleep is like again, able to function a more normal life on a daily basis, every single day! Most importantly I am free of the guilty feelings of failing my children. Kratom has given me a true quality of life back. I now fear I will have to live the rest of my life as I have for those 20 yrs past, I deserve to live free of that pain but without Kratom it just doesn't seem possible.

name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm a 51 year old former RN. Former due in large part to fibromyalgia, which was diagnosed in 1996, becoming increasingly worse over the last 20 years. I also have osteoarthritis (diagnosed 1996 as well), sciatica, anxiety and depression. Over the last 20 years I have been prescribed a multitude of medications. Some worked ok-briefly, some a little, some not at all. They all had a boatload of bad side effects. I began managing my symptoms with kratom about two years ago after an RN friend of mine recommended it to me. Much to my surprise it provided more relief than any of the pharmaceuticals I have tried, with minimal side effects. Really the ONLY side effect I have is constipation, which is easily managed. I experience NO high or foggy feeling. I can manage my symptoms with kratom well enough to allow me to care for my aging parents. Without kratom (which my mother also takes for

CONFIDENTIAL

severe arthritis) I am scared to death of how I will be able to care for them. Yes, I probably could get a Norco prescription again, however I would rather not. To avoid dependence on Norco I only took it a few times a week at most, waiting until my pain was severe enough to be in tears. I do not want to return to that existence. That is no way to live.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a 38 year old wife, mother and small business owner. I suffer from chronic headaches including Episodic Paroxysmal Hemicrania, back pain from herniated discs, an annular tear and pinched nerves, and debilitating abdominal pain from IBS. I have been to countless doctors who have prescribed about 50 different medications, and none of them have really helped but several of them have caused terrible side effects. I would sit in the office of a pain clinic for 3 hours only to be prescribed narcotic painkillers that left me feeling high and nauseous, and seriously clouded my thinking. I discovered kratom about a year ago when someone suggested it as a natural alternative to prescription drugs. I did some research first and was unable to find anything that indicated that it was dangerous, so I tried it. I was skeptical but when I tried it I was amazed - it made the pain tolerable without making me feel high, and if I didn't take it I didn't experience any withdrawal symptoms. I was especially pleased with how it worked for my IBS. The cramping stopped, and I became "regular" again and was finally able to eat normally. I also became much happier because I was able to run my business and spend time with my family without being in constant pain or just feeling too sick to function. If this ban goes through I don't know what I'll do. Kratom has allowed me to stop all 5 of the drugs I was taking daily (some to treat the side effects of others), and now I can't bear the thought of going back to prescription pain meds.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am a 46 year old industrial maintenance technician for over 26 years. I have suffered from degenerative joint disease for over 8 years in my hips, knees and lower back. I was prescribed percocets and fentanyl patches for my pain for 6 years. I became severely addicted to synthetic opiates because of this. I hated the fact that I had to depend on these opiates just to function and work everyday. I found kratom 9 months ago, after doing research for natural pain relief. I cannot thank the discovery of this plant enough for giving me my life back, free of opiates and being able to have a clear mind. This plant has honestly saved my life. A plant that can relieve pain like kratom does and breaks the cycle of opiates abuse when I thought I would never be able to get off them, should be kept available to us. This plant has honestly gave me my life back, even though I still have the DJD, I can function, with a clear mind and enjoy life again.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I am 36 years old, a mother, & a wife, & a small business owner. I also have endometriosis, herniated disks in my back, & hip dysplasia. My whole life all I ever wanted was to be a mother. Only 2 years ago I was practically bed ridden & was told by several doctors I should start preparing for back surgery. I had to take my new baby to doctor's office after doctor's office and he watched as I was prescribed pill after pill. 11 medications in total including several narcotics specifically 100 percocets a month. This was no life. And I was not the mother I wanted to be. I was in pain but in so much of a fog that I just wanted to sleep. I was riddled with guilt every single time I opened a pill bottle and my son had to watch while mommy took her medicine. I was hopeless, depressed, and fighting anxiety because I felt so stuck. Don't worry they gave me a pill for that too. I stumbled upon kratom after trying to find an alternative to the harmful medications I was taking. I was interested because it is 100% natural & had been around for centuries with no reported deaths or overdoses and no real side effects. Especially in comparison to the chemical cocktail I got filled at the pharmacy every month. I felt like I found a miracle. And it truly is a miracle that this plant just grows on the earth and can & has helped so many people. Now my life is mine again. Mine and my son's and my family's. I was able to begin taking yoga classes and started seeing a chiropractor. No surgery. No pills. I haven't taken so much as a Tylenol in over a year. I can play with my little boy and make plans for the future because we are all healthy now. When I think that I might have to go back to that life on the couch riddled with pills and hopelessness it is too much to bare.

CONFIDENTIAL

Please do not make kratom a schedule 1 drug. Please just learn the truth about what it is and what it is not. It is not an opiate. It is not a dangerous chemical. It is a plant. A natural miracle. And we kratom users are not addicts. We are mothers and fathers. Husbands and wives. We are teachers and nurses and small business owners who don't wish to be heavily medicated by the prescription drugs that are poisoning our country. Please make your decision based on facts and science not media hype and misinformation. Thank you very much for your time. Sincerely, [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED]. I discovered Kratom 3 years ago when my back pain got really out of hand. I was literally spending most of my days in bed because the pain got so bad I couldn't function. I have 3 children so I had to look for a way to control the pain without the side effects from opiates that would leave me sleeping more than being awake. I discovered kratom. I did a lot of research before ever taking a pill. I wanted to make sure it was safe for me. So after my research I was comfortable enough to order some and try it. It starting working on the pain for day 1. It gave me energy and made me feel so much better. 3 years later I am now back to working and raising my children like I was before my back took me down. I have scoliosis and sciatica. The pain would get so pain I couldn't even stand and now I work as a housekeeper at a hotel. Kratom gave me my life back. Opiates always left me in a haze and I couldn't raise my children feeling high all the time. I also feared taking opiates because I didn't want to get addicted so I am so thankful for Kratom and I know many many more feel the same way. Stop trying to ban a coffee plant and focus on the prescription drugs that are the real problem. Please stop the ban!

Sincerely
[REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED]. I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue around 15 years ago. I also have some neurological problems, including chronic migraines and restless leg syndrome and have spent more than my fair share of sleepless nights. I also had pneumonia several years ago that left me with scar tissue in one of my lungs. It burns every now and then and is quite painful at times. All of this has severely impacted my ability to work full time, which I haven't done in 12 years.

I've been put on many pharmaceutical medications over the years, including Neurontin, Cymbalta and Vicodin, which all helped ease my pain, but turned me into unemotional zombie. I cannot take NSAIDS due to another medical condition and I don't take pain killers unless I'm really hurting. But since taking kratom I haven't had to. I also suffer from depression and anxiety and the Cymbalta, which helped the fibro pain, really wasn't addressing the depression/anxiety issues, even though it's supposed to. So I started looking at alternative options, including botanicals.

I learned about kratom nearly seven years ago and decided to give it a try. It has been a godsend for me. Not many people were talking about it when I first started taking it, but all I knew was that it helped me not only to be free of pain, but it also gave me enough energy to be productive and get through my day. I found that after 10 years of sleepless nights, I could get a decent night's sleep.

I don't consider myself a drug addict. I'm a 61 year old woman who suffers from pain. Kratom doesn't get a person high and you can't overdose on it (you will get sick if you take too much). I do not want to become a slave to opiates. I'd rather be in pain, but I honestly don't know what's going to happen to me and so many others if this ban takes place.

Hi, I'm [REDACTED]. A senior citizen, wife, mother, and grandma. I have suffered a non-cancerous brain tumor, which left me deaf in one ear 17 years ago and caused other cranial nerve issues to set in. I have Hashimoto's autoimmune thyroiditis, trigeminal neuralgia (one of the so-called "suicide diseases" due to

CONFIDENTIAL

the extreme pain it causes), herniated discs in neck, daily migraine for 32 years, spinal stenosis, generalized anxiety disorder, and end-stage neurological Lyme disease diagnosed last year but likely acquired at least 25 years ago. I have been on many medications for the above conditions, all legally prescribed and taken as the doctors ordered. I use no alcohol or illegal drugs and seek no highs from medication---only relief from symptoms. A year ago, I learned about Kratom and tried it, since RXs provide me such limited help. I have found Kratom to be wonderfully beneficial in remediating many of the terrible effects of the conditions I am faced with. It helps lessen my pain and makes my days and tasks far easier to manage. My life without Kratom will be difficult to bear. Please reconsider any proposed ban. Thank you.

My Name is [REDACTED]. I am a 10 year veteran of the United States Navy and I have used Kratom occasionally over the past 4 years to manage symptoms of anxiety and depression. I chose to take kratom as a natural and more therapeutic option and have had great success in using it. I did not like the prescription anti-depressants given to me because I had adverse reactions to 3 different ones I've been prescribed and it was effecting my daily life. With Kratom I have been able to function as a normal member of society. I feel like kratom is just therapeutic enough to take the edge of. I cannot fathom the reasoning behind an all out ban on this tea leaf and implore you to reconsider and think of the thousands of people this will adversely affect. I live my life with integrity and I am certainly not a criminal. Thank you.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 36 year old computer programmer working for a startup in California. I am also a veteran of the US army infantry, having served twelve years and multiple combat tours. I have been diagnosed with chronic PTSD and other conditions which cause chronic pain in my back and knees and hands. The VA put me on many different pharmaceutical prescriptions to manage my PTSD symptoms, and opiate painkillers to manage my chronic pain. But as a computer programmer, it became virtually impossible to do my job on all of these medications. They also didn't work very well to fight my symptoms. There was a time in my life after I got out of the military where I couldn't leave the house. My life was in shambles, even with the medication. I started researching alternatives and found Kratom, a plant from Indonesia in the same family as the coffee tree. After talking it over with my VA doc, I decided to try it. Within a couple of hours of trying Kratom for the first time, my back pain was nearly gone. Over the next few weeks, I also discovered that Kratom helped tremendously with the anxiety and depression of PTSD. I was able to return to work, even starting my own business. I would say that nowadays, thanks to Kratom, I am just a regular person. I provide for my family, I am active in their lives again, and I work full time. When I take Kratom, I pay my taxes.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a 36 year old Security Engineer from [REDACTED], WA. In 2012 I was diagnosed with cervical cancer and after 3 surgeries I was left with chronic pain which left me bedridden most days. The doctors provided me with all types of pain killers which still left me bedridden and unable to work due to their side effects. I would be slightly out of pain, but be too "high" to function. In 2013 I was introduced to Kratom by a friend who was utilizing it for her fibromyalgia. I tried it soon after and was amazed at its effectiveness. I was pain free, had some energy and it did not have the "high" that narcotic pain pills have. I have been using Kratom ever since and it has given me my life back. I am now working which I could not do before, I am able to fully function which I also could not do before.

Not long after I tried Kratom I began reading what could only be described as propaganda against Kratom on different media outlets. There were misconceptions that Kratom was the new pain killer stronger than Morphine that cause relapses in opiate abusers. There were reports of deaths, however they were not proven to be caused by Kratom, just anecdotal evidence stating Kratom was the cause. For example there was recently a death attributed to Kratom by a mother who's son had committed suicide and she blamed it on Kratom since she found empty packets in his room. The young man was also on a mire of anti-depressants which are known to cause suicidal thoughts in young people. Correlation is not causation and I have not seen one credible death linked to Kratom where the cause of death was proven

CONFIDENTIAL

to actually be Kratom. I would like to also mention that while 15 deaths have been erroneously linked to Kratom, Four deaths in the UK and up to 60 worldwide have recently been directly attributed to the substance 2,4-dinitrophenol (DNP), an industrial chemical that has become popular among people wanting to lose weight, including bodybuilders and people with eating disorders, however this is not on an emergency list for Scheduling. The DEA notice also attributes over 600 calls to poison control, however to put that in perspective poison control received 4201 calls in regards to energy drinks and caffeine in 2013 alone.

Current peer reviewed studies on Kratom and its constituents have shown that Kratom has no acute toxicity, displays powerful antioxidant and antibacterial properties, assists with drug and alcohol withdrawal symptoms, contains several oxindole alkaloids which have exhibited potent immunomodulatory properties, and even contains constituents that have exhibited anti-cancer properties! A brief search in any scholarly database will present many peer reviewed studies and clinical trials that can attest to the medical potential of this plant. In short, Kratom does not present a significant threat to human health or safety on any level and does not belong in Schedule 1, period.

If Kratom does end up on Schedule 1, even temporarily, we will never be able to research this natural plant as a medicine because as we all know once this has been put on Schedule 1, it's not coming off. Marijuana is a great example. Adding it will make it almost impossible to do the research necessary to show the medicinal benefits. Kratom has been used for hundreds of years in Thailand and is currently banned, but Kratom, also known as Thang, Thom, and Biak, was not originally banned because of substance abuse. When the Thai government started levying taxes from users and shops involved in the opium trade many users switched to Kratom to manage their withdrawal symptoms. The Greater East Asia War in 1942 and declining revenues from the opium trade eventually suppressed the opium market competition by making Kratom illegal. Thailand is now looking to legalize Kratom once again as people have been using this for thousands of years with no cases of overdose, psychosis, murder, violent crime. Never in all of recorded history.

Not to mention this plant is saving lives. People that were addicted to opiates are being helped by it and getting their life back. That is not because Kratom is the same as opiates, because it isn't. It doesn't get you high, it takes away the withdrawal symptoms associated with strong opiate pain killers. Kratom was something they could use to manage their disease on their own time. It was easily accessible and affordable unlike the other options such as Methadone or Suboxone which is hard to get on a program if you don't have insurance or can't afford the drug. Now, with the DEA taking away that option I'm afraid people are going to go back to whatever they were doing before causing the death toll will skyrocket. If you want to save lives and keep people safe as you claim, you will keep Kratom legal.

I do understand there should be some regulations concerning Kratom, such as the "extracts" and "drinks" that people have made and added other known or unknown chemicals. These should be regulated, but I would ask that whole leaf remain obtainable.

In closing I would kindly ask you to please don't take my life away again. I am a mother of 4 who has to work full time to support her family and I am unable to manage my pain effectively in other ways. Me and hundreds of thousands of others are begging you to reconsider this decision and look at both sides of this situation, not just the unproven fear driven side.

Sincerely,

██████████

My name is ██████████ ██████████. I am here to say that as a 64 year old woman I never thought that I would take something like Kratom. After many decades of pain due to spinal stenosis and fibro and trying all that the doctor's told me to try; pain pills, antidepressants, spinal blocks, physical therapy, I finally just didn't use anything for years because none of those things worked and why should I spend money on

CONFIDENTIAL

something that didn't work and could potentially make me an addict or worse. So after going another decade just getting by because of constant pain and fatigue and after much, and I mean much, research and encouragement from family I tried Kratom. I could not believe how much relief I had almost immediately. Now I don't take it on a daily basis, but when I am really in pain or having a flare I know that I can get relief and that is a life changer for me. In fact, a couple of weeks ago, my daughter and granddaughter wanted to go see a cave because granddaughter had never been in one. Well, I took the Kratom that morning with some orange juice and for the first time in a very very long time, I walked for over an hour down stairs, and ramps and uneven ground in a cave. Yea, I might have a life back to enjoy with the grandkids.

That was what i thought before the DEA published their intent to ban Kratom and make it a Schedule I drug. This is so wrong for so many. I hope you will take this as serious as those of us who have gotten our lives back and are functioning, stable, contributing members of society.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a mother of a 2 and a 3 year old, working at a bank and going to school full time for computer science. I was in a hit and run with a drunk driver, while I was pregnant with our son. Because of that crash, my son was born over a month early. I suffered broken ribs and many other injuries, including physical and many emotional. I couldn't function as a part of my family. With the pain and PTSD, I couldn't take care of my children, I couldn't have a relationship with my friends, or with my fiancé. I lived in bed, in pain, until I was on enough prescription meds, prescribed by my doctor, to kill me. Which it nearly did. The meds only worsened my anxiety, my depression and barely worked for the pain. I thought I would be better off dead and no longer just a burden to my family. I was on (and completely addicted to) several anti-depressants, anxiety and pain meds. I had no quality of life. No way to hold down a job, school, or anything else. Finding kratom literally saved my life. I was able to get off all of the medications. My anxiety, depression, insomnia, were all gone but most importantly the severe debilitating physical pain. Was gone. I am able to function as a productive part of society, hold down a job, my family and go to school. Without kratom, none of this will be possible for me any longer. I am able to play with and take care of my kids. And contribute to my family. I feel like I am actually worth something. And I am terrified of what will happen to me, if kratom is banned. It is definitely life or death for me. Thanks for reading.

I am a registered nurse of 17 years with a bachelor degree, working on a master's. I am also a "Kratom consumer". Years ago I had a series of back injuries from lifting patients. This led to an autoimmune disorder called Ankylosing Spondylitis. A disorder that primarily attacks the spine. I have worked in various departments, from OB to ICU.

Caring for thousands of patients over the years. I tried every therapy available, from pain medication and injections, to acupuncture and herbal remedies. Nothing helped. I found myself no longer able to do my job effectively. And have had to since take a "desk job" reviewing charts. I still suffered immensely despite the biologic therapy (Humira, Remicade, and now Cosentyx) and as of last year was seriously looking into disability. Which would make me no longer a continuing member of society, and a financial burden to taxpayers. But last year I was introduced to an herb called Kratom.

I researched the plant extensively before even attempting to try it. I am personally against any recreational use of any substance and to this day have never tried a single illegal drug, even when I was young. After my research, I tried it. I found not only did it help with my pain, but I could think clearer and function better than I had in years! The worst side effect was constipation. I was able to wean off of prescribed opiates, which did help with pain but made it impossible to do my job. And as a nurse, I can not have any mind altering substances in my system while caring for patients. Since Kratom doesn't cause the drowsiness or alter my thinking process like opiates, I am now able to work better than I ever

CONFIDENTIAL

did before.

I have several other agendas. The first being that I have family that depends on this herb to function. One with an autoimmune disorder similar to mine, and several others with back injuries as a result of construction jobs and motor vehicle accidents. All have said that they cannot function well without Kratom. Not because of a dependency, but because of pain. And these are hard working individuals that have tried every other means available, including surgery and various medications. The other agenda I have, is I lost my spouse to suicide when he could not get the pain relief that was so desperately needed. We have insurance and he literally spent years trying every treatment and medication available to no avail. He despised drug use and never took illegal drugs in his life, and rarely took prescriptions. I often wonder if this herb could have saved his life. He was disabled for our entire 10 years of marriage and leaves behind a 9 year old daughter.

I'm a married 30 yr 4-year college educated, stay at home mom to 3 intelligent, healthy children. Some 10 years ago I was prescribed opiate painkillers for a chronic condition, Interstitial Cystitis (diagnosed via instillation and cystoscopy). I became physically dependent on the narcotic pain relief prescribed to me. When those became unavailable, my drug abusing husband introduced me to heroin to ward off withdrawal. I used that for a short duration, until I found out I was pregnant. I immediately told my OBGYN of the situation, and not wanting to risk a miscarriage from withdrawal, she placed me in a methadone clinic. There I stayed for 8 long encumbered years. I was a model patient; however, I became frustrated given that the dependency that led to my placement in the program lasted only a month. The clinic itself did nothing in terms of advocating for me to wean myself out of the clinic. In other words, while this was the safest course of action for my unborn child, this maintenance treatment had made my dependence far worse. The methadone sugar cravings wreaked havoc on my teeth and caused heart problems. I also had a close relative die from a methadone overdose during my own time dealing with the maintenance clinic setting. The heart problems landed me in the hospital when I had a seizure and was diagnosed with elongated QT syndrome, caused by the high dose methadone, at which point I was switched to suboxone. However, I was in a good place mentally in my life and I wished to be beholden to no one but myself. I had no desire to seek a "high", but I was still fearful of the withdrawal that I would incur from suboxone detox, so I researched and found Kratom. I am so eternally grateful that quality, Kratom-community vetted products from reputable vendors were available to me during this period. As a nearly catatonic mother and wife from the effects of the methadone and suboxone I felt as though I was nothing more than a burden to my family. Kratom use has never made me feel intoxicated, altered my perception of reality or cause me to have cravings after disuse. It did not make me high in any sense of the word; it repressed my pain, anxiety and depression with a slight energy boost like coffee without the jitters. I was human again. I stayed on Kratom daily for about six months, & I came off of Kratom completely a month ago. Now for the first time in a decade I am completely psychoactive substance free. There were some slight withdrawals associated with my Kratom detox after daily use for 6 months. Objectively, these included: chills, mild depression and anxiety, but the anxiety & depression were present before I found Kratom and after cessation. If Kratom were to remain legal, I would undoubtedly prefer to utilize Kratom tea to combat my ongoing depression and anxiety over prescription medications. I have tried many, only to stop due to the debilitating side effects I've experienced. I can only speak for myself and how Kratom has helped me become a better mom, wife and overall human being. Despite not being a current consumer of Kratom, my heart breaks for those whose livelihood and families will be torn apart from chronic pain or addiction should this DEA ban become final. My focus of advocacy sits on the heavy weight this puts on the humanity of our great Nation. The opiate epidemic is real and killing countless more everyday, when a quasi-solution is right before our eyes. This "temporary ban" is the real "imminent threat to public safety." As a once opioid dependent person, I wanted nothing more than to admit my faults and take full control mending my own physical health, while working in conjunction with my mental health professional. My heart breaks for those whose livelihood and families will be torn apart from chronic pain or addiction should this DEA ban become final. The gift of Kratom raised me out of a prescription-induced fog and dramatically increased my quality of life. This was only made possible as it

CONFIDENTIAL

was extremely effective, and more importantly, easily available, from reputable vendors for use in the privacy of my own home, with family support and supervision. Like any ingested substance, responsible use is the key and as this grassroots moment has shown, clearly, the responsible consumers far outweigh the outliers in this scenario. Please understand, I advocate for responsible Kratom use and public availability, not for me, but for the sake of the children of those suffering from the disease of addiction, chronic pain patients, anxiety/Depression/PTSD sufferers, and all who will deal with the inevitable fallout from this well-intentioned but misguided decision.

I'm 65, a retired writer and horseback riding instructor. I was on hydrocodone for chronic pain since my first (of four) back surgeries in 1996, so 20 years. I learned about Kratom last year. It is the only thing other than opiates that helps this one particular kind of back pain that especially debilitates me. I have said often that finding Kratom for me was like getting released from prison. Now I will have to go back in. I don't want to live much longer that way, so I will probably check out early, especially since my fellow humans are sending me the message that they do not care that I have to live in misery. I won't. And I find myself hoping karma smites them.

A Kratom ban will not save lives, it will cost them, and mine is one of them.

██████, 59, ██████ Tx. After 15 years of relentless pain from Fibromyalgia I developed Trigeminal Neuralgia. I now have suffered from the condition known as the "Suicide" Disease (for which there is no cure) because the pain is so severe, for 10 years in addition to Fibromyalgia. Until my discovery of Kratom I was at the mercy of very serious medications that came with very serious side effects. Kratom has enabled a huge reduction in some of those medications. I no longer need to constantly take antidepressants, anti anxiety meds or strong pain killers. Kratom has enabled a intensely needed improvement in my quality of life! Never have I experienced a foggy head, "lala" land, confusion or hallucinated with Kratom like the other meds caused. I live with a deep sense of gratitude every day! Please do not take away my option of an improved life by banning Kratom!

My name is ██████. I am a 30 year old professional from Idaho. In 2008 I had a traumatic spine injury resulting in chronic pain. I hated taking prescription opioids for pain as they hampered my quality of life more than they helped. I found Kratom in 2012 and have taken it since with no unpleasant side effects. It has helped me with my pain, energy levels and positive outlook on life. I have reviewed all available data and I firmly believe that Kratom is as safe or safer than coffee and other caffeine containing products. Kratom should remain a supplement in the United States as it is in Canada. Many states have reviewed the available data on Kratom and decided to keep it legal. Please, focus on the problem: Prescription painkillers and illicit drugs. Kratom is not a plant that can be easily abused as it has a ceiling effect i.e. more is NOT better. Please step in to stop this regulatory overreach by the FDA and DEA. This plant is also a great tool in the fight against our current opioid problems. Kratom is NOT an opioid. This is FACT. Contrary to the statements from the DEA, Kratom has been the focus of intense study and has been found to be effective in helping people with a multitude of issues. What will they ban next? Coffee? If the DEA applied the same logic to coffee it would be a schedule 1 substance. This is a deplorable act on the part of institutions that have been entrusted to protect Americans.

My name is ██████. I'm a father of 5. Several years ago, I had an industrial accident and had to have my shoulder rebuilt. I was in constant pain and the doctor's solution to that was to give me all the narcotic pain medication I wanted. After using opiates for 6 years, I had become a legal junkie. Not only was I taking the pills for pain, but also to get high. One day a friend suggested kratom. I ordered some and quit taking opiates cold turkey. 4 years later, I haven't touched an opiate and am able to successfully manage my pain with kratom. Kratom doesn't get me high, and I am not addicted, as I sometimes go a

CONFIDENTIAL

few months without taking it with no ill effects.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 33 years old. I suffer from Fibromyalgia and Endometriosis. Before I found Kratom I was in so much pain from my illnesses that I would be bedridden at least 2 weeks every month. I was on 10 medications and severely depressed. The pain medications my doctor prescribed didn't really help with the pain and I became dependent on them. Seven months ago I found Kratom. Since then I have not stayed in bed one day. I am now only taking 2 medications. Kratom has helped improve my life immensely. I am no longer depressed. I even exercise now and have lost 25 pounds. My kids and husband love the person I've become and so do I.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a mother and I work as a piano and violin teacher. I have been taking kratom for two years to help with pain issues. I had a prescription for pain medication before but the prescription medication left me feeling sleepy and sick for a lot of the time. When I started taking kratom it made a huge difference in my quality of life. It helps me deal with the pain (shoulder and back) and also helps with energy. I do not want to have to go back to prescription opiates. I might have to if there is a ban on kratom.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am 51. I have suffered from severe fibromyalgia for 10 years. I am married and have three children in college. My doctor has tried a multitude of prescriptions to help me and yet I remained bedridden. We tried Lyrica, Savella and many heavy hitter narcotics, even fentanyl, and nothing really helped. I have been to the University of Michigan hospital and the Cleveland Clinic and they couldn't find anything that could help.

Because of kratom I enjoy my family and they enjoy me. Before kratom i was chained to my bed or couch with pain and had to use a walker or wheelchair. I have been taking kratom for 2 years. Before writing this testimonial, I went on a 10+ mile bike ride with my husband. We do this pretty much everyday. Kratom isn't a cure. But now I finally have a life.

I feel like I have a sentence of death with this ban looming over me. My family and I are trying to do everything as fast as we can with events. And are doing household stuff too like putting things in easy reach as the pain will be excruciating to reach for or lift things without kratom. And tightening all stair railings as i will have to pull myself up the stairs without kratom. We have a trip to Wyoming planned for next summer with the solar eclipse. I will have to stay home and will have to find someone to stay with me should kratom be banned. I don't want to go back to being bedridden again. My family will lose me again if kratom is banned. My husband and three adult children are also fighting to keep Kratom legal.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I have several medical conditions which have all been GREATLY improved if not eliminated by my use of kratom. 1 Failed back syndrome 2 DDD 3 Arthritis 4 depression 5 Anxiety 6 High blood sugar 7 high blood pressure 8 Restless leg Syndrome. I have also gotten off most of my medications for these by using kratom which has helped more and with no side effects.

I was on 180 mg of Methadone for my constant pain and now I don't take anything except for kratom which manages my pain so much better. Please don't allow the DEA to ban this plant that has helped me be a productive person again. I'm now able to work part time, play and interact with my grandkids and have a normal life where before on pharmaceutical drugs I was house bound unable to do much except t for laying around in my recliner watching tv or sleeping due to the side effects of those drugs. 10 in all. I appreciate your time reading this thank you.

CONFIDENTIAL

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am 31 years old and I suffer from chronic migraine disorder. I have had migraines since I was a teenager but later on in my adult life they have got much worse to where I would have either a headache or migraine almost everyday of my life. I have been through countless medications (including Botox injections) and doctors to try and resolve my headaches but either would have unbearable side effects or no effect at all. I have struggled to maintain a job without getting any sick days and missing too much work that I had to be reduced to less hours. Chronic migraine is the 8th most disabling disease in America yet migraines are the most underfunded neurological disease.

I discovered Kratom after looking for other natural avenues to help my migraines since I was having no luck barely at all to resolve my pain. I researched it and decided to give it a try. I took a small dose of it and then started to see the results very fast. I have gone to having a headache/ migraine almost every day to only having a few a month. I have been able to go to work on a regular basis and get back to regular life. Kratom has helped me so tremendously and I'm afraid after it is banned I will be forced back to medication that doesn't work for me and back to pain everyday. I finally have my life back and I don't want to go back to my old life of pain and solitude. This ban can affect my life a lot and I'm scared to see it happen.

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED], I'm 35 years old and I'm a Cardiovascular Sonographer for a large University Hospital. I am a homeowner, tax-paying, law-abiding, professional. I'm a wife, sister, daughter, colleague, friend and neighbor and I've also been using Kratom for the last 4 years to help with depression, anxiety and to manage a past addiction to prescription painkillers. I've dealt with depression and anxiety my whole life to the point where I've been hospitalized for panic attacks. In 2009/2010 I had a few significant traumas occur in my life, one of which being my dearest friend committing suicide by putting a gun in her mouth and pulling the trigger. That was the straw that broke the camel's back as they say. At that same time I was prescribed Vicodin to treat a leg injury I had sustained and like many others I found it also assuaged the deep emotional pain and anxiety I was dealing with all day and night. When I realized I was addicted I went to my Doctor right away because I had never so much as smoked or done any substances before. He prescribed me Suboxone which was POISON for my body. I searched high and low for an alternative that would be safe, natural and not just swap one problem for another. I found Kratom and haven't touched a prescription opiate, anti-anxiety, or suboxone in four years. I'm the happiest, healthiest and most productive I've EVER been in my life and Kratom is an integral part of that. I'm afraid if this ban goes through I'll be forced to either become a felon (not an option), suffer and potentially relapse, or go back to pharmaceuticals that not only not help me but HURT me. This is LIFE and DEATH for hundreds of thousands of Americans. This plant has brought nothing but good into my life and if it's ripped away I fear for my very life.
[REDACTED] [REDACTED], BA, RDCS, RVT

My name is [REDACTED] & I'm a 39 year old female. In 2006 I was diagnosed with Limb-Girdle Muscular Dystrophy. On top of this, I also have chronic back pain from bulging discs, degenerative disc disease & a decade of working on an assembly line for [REDACTED] Co. There is no cure for my condition. Doctors prescribed me powerful narcotic pain medication to treat my pain. The side effects were terrible, so I was prescribed more medication to treat side effects. Eventually the meds stopped working. Taking the medications made me sick, but not taking them was worse. I felt hopeless in this vicious cycle & had no quality of life. Then I saw a post in my Facebook Chronic pain support group about Kratom. I did some research & placed an order. Kratom saved my life. I was able to quit taking all my pain, depression & anxiety medications. The last 514 days since I started taking Kratom I have been able to do more than I did in the previous 8 years. I feel like I've got my life back.

This is LIFE and DEATH for hundreds of thousands of Americans. This plant has brought nothing but good into my life and if it's ripped away I fear for my very life.

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a 47 year old responsible female. I found kratom almost a year ago and have been using it daily since then to manage my chronic pain and fatigue from fibromyalgia and hypothyroidism and other chronic health issues. I was diagnosed with fibro in 2003 and was put on disability by 2004 and spent most of my days in bed. Numerous medications was tried to help with all my many symptoms but few if any really helped. Was on antidepressants, muscle relaxers, pain medicine, Fentanyl, percocet, norco, adderall, nuvigil and many others. kratom has been a lifesaver for me and has given me a better quality of life than what I have had for the last 15 years. I really don't want to go back to living my life spending all my days in bed which is really not living at all. I'm afraid that is what will happen if this amazing herb is banned, and Not just my life that will be adversely affected but thousands of others as well. Praying the ban is stopped, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm a 40 yr old married mother of 2. I have had chronic back pain (lumbar disk degeneration, arthritic muscle spasms) since 2005. I have been on pain relievers and muscle relaxers since then. I was tired of taking pills and them not always working so I went online to find an alternative and found KRATOM! I read nothing but positive reviews about it. I immediately stopped taking pills and it's been 4 yrs now. Kratom saved my life , I am able to work full time , take walks with my family and do everyday normal activities due to Kratom. My life will be turned upside down over this DEA ban and it's not fair. I don't want to go back to pills and I won't. A natural leaf that's compared to coffee should not be banned. People should be able to take any natural remedy that they want, not the DEA telling you it's in the same class as heroin. It deeply saddens me.

My Name is [REDACTED]. I am 51 years old. I work as a database report writer. I have suffered my entire life from anxiety and severe depression. Anti-depressants and anti-anxiety meds have not been of any value to me as I felt little to no effect from them yet experienced severe side effects. I first tried Kratom a little over a year ago and found the effects it had finally provided some relief to both the depression and the anxiety. Everything about my health seemed to begin to balance out. I stopped consuming as much alcohol, got a healthy appetite back, slept peacefully and was generally better able to manage my life. Please reconsider the ban on a dried leaf from a tree that has saved my life.

My name is [REDACTED]. I have been using Kratom for chronic pain caused by the side effects from an extensive course of antibiotics for about two years, as well as gradual and long-lasting pain from complications of H-Flu Meningitis which caused me to have spinal cord damage. Before I heard about Kratom, I was taking Vicodin, but upon stopping the drug, I began to suffer extreme symptoms of withdrawal, even though my dosage was quite low. In the few weeks after stopping the Vicodin, and researching natural pain relief, I had resorted to over-the-counter pain meds such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, and Excedrin, at one point taking as many as ten to twelve pills a day. As a result of believing I'd have to deal with this pain for the rest of my life, I was also facing depression to the point where my family started to worry. I was skeptical about Kratom, at first, but figured I'd give it a try. To date, I rarely take synthetic pain medication. Not only has Kratom provided me with wonderful pain relief, but I spend a lot less money on it compared to what I was paying for over-the-counter pain relief.

If Kratom were to become a Schedule I drug, I would have to face the real possibility of catastrophic side effects associated with prescription drugs, as well as OTCs. Knowing that Kratom provides strong pain relief without side effects gives me peace of mind that I will never have to face medical complications in the future.

CONFIDENTIAL

I am a 61 year old female with 2 Herniated disks, Spinal Stenosis and Sciatica. I was prescribed cortisone, Xanax, Soma, and Oxycodone. I was not at all functional. Previously I had mothered 4 children (triplets are in there), and been very successful in Financial and Supplement sales since age 31. I don't like not functioning or working. When I found Kratom I got my life back. It is very "self regulating". If you take too much you vomit. This is about freedom of choice. We need some folks interested in Science here.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 55 years old and I have been using Kratom for over 5 years. I like so many people started out using pain pills because of numerous surgeries. I searched the internet for an alternative to pain medication and found Kratom. It has been a lifesaver. Two years ago I lost my only child to alcohol. I am pretty sure without Kratom, I wouldn't be here today. Besides helping with the pain I have, it helps me to get out of bed in the morning. The hole left in my heart is never going to go away, but with Kratom I can at least make an effort to get through another day. I don't know what I will do if I can't use it anymore. I do not want to be sedated for the rest of my life with pharmaceuticals just because they are legal. I prefer the natural way instead of something created in a laboratory. But I also prefer Kratom because it has worked for me.

I am a 32 year old woman with a 5 ½ year old daughter. I am an artist, musician, jewelry designer, wife, mother. I have a family history of alcoholism, and severe anxiety/depression. I also suffer from chronic back pain due to fused vertebrae in my spine. Over the years i tried several anti anxiety medications, have been addicted to opiates and a heavy drinker. My drinking got so bad that I did not foresee a day that I would be able to get through the day without a drink (or 5). I sincerely believe that if i had known about kratom sooner my drinking would not have had such a detrimental effect on my life. Nothing else has worked as well for my anxiety, for my pain, and to keep me from drinking. I don't even like the taste of alcohol anymore. I also believe that if the several friends I knew who died from drug overdoses had known about kratom, they may still be here today. I don't like to think about what will happen if it becomes illegal, when it helps so many people. It has truly changed my life for the better. - [REDACTED] [REDACTED], California

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am 28 years old and I have used Kratom for close to two years now to help with arthritis from a hip replacement as well as opiate addiction. I was in the worst place of my life two years ago before i found kratom. I had no money and no hope of escaping prescription drugs or heroin addiction. I took a title loan out on my car to get suboxone which failed me miserably I was back to narcotics within two weeks. Then I found kratom I now have a new car with money in the bank and my fiancée and I have 2 month old son. Currently I'm looking to buy a house for my family in the spring. Please don't take away my life from me and my family

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am 24 years old and a graduate of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] University ([REDACTED]). I first started using kratom a couple of months ago for Anxiety, ADHD, and Depression. It has literally changed my life. I DO NOT use kratom to get high. I just take a 2-3 capsules 2-3 times a day and it helps my ability to focus immensely and allows me to relax and not pay so much attention to my often negative and non-productive thoughts. It is literally the only thing I've ever found that truly gives me relief from Generalized Anxiety Disorder. I cannot imagine this plant becoming illegal and I hate the idea of being criminalized for just trying to help myself. The only negative side effect I've occasionally gotten from kratom is constipation but that is nothing compared to the side effects I've gotten from prescription medications like klonopin (clonazepam) which has caused me to have suicidal thoughts (something I previously was never experienced with). Please, please, if you're reading this, do whatever you can to keep this life-saving plant legal. If you don't help and it is banned, you may deeply regret it one day when you, or someone important to you, is suffering greatly from chronic pain, anxiety, depression, PTSD,

CONFIDENTIAL

fibromyalgia, or many of the other things that kratom helps with, and you/they do not have access to this natural alternative. Thank you so much for your time. All the best, [REDACTED].

My name is [REDACTED]. I've had a problem with drugs since I was 16 years old. In and out of prison since I've been 20. I recently found out about kratom about 2 years ago. I've become a productive member of society since then. I don't ever want to get high. I finally am on the road to getting custody of my son. Before this time, I'd use everything I could get my hands on to try and maintain my addiction. Now, I don't spend every bit of my money on drugs. I exercise, hang out with friends, actually participate in my life, not just exist. There should be no reason for this plant to be banned. It helps me with social anxiety and ADHD. I've tried over prescription medications for both, and I end up grossly abusing them, and end up in that downward spiral again. I'm afraid that once I end up running out of kratom, with it being banned, I'll head right down that path again. I'm 29 years old and, for the first time in my life, have been successful. It's about to all be taken away. I can see why heroin is a scheduled drug, it destroys lives, I'm yet to find someone who had their life made WORSE by taking kratom!! - [REDACTED]

I am a thirty-four year old U.S. Army veteran. I have been married for over eleven years and have two children. I have been using Kratom in place of opiates the VA hospital prescribed. I do not get "high". I do feel a slight energy boost. I also feel relaxed because the pain in my back is not overwhelming. I suppose that if Kratom is made illegal I will still try to find it. So then this U.S. veteran of two tours in support of OIF will become a felon. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

I am a 29 year old logistics coordinator. For the past 10 years I have struggled to work because of pain, mostly in my back, but other places as well. I always thought it was because I was heavy, so I lost weight. I was still in pain. I tried to get into better shape, exercising most days of the week; gritting my teeth through body wide muscular pain. Every day. I was diagnosed with many acute conditions, many times. Pulled muscles, tendinitis, bursitis, TMJ. I went to physical therapy for my hands, my back, and my feet. I saw a chiropractor. I was placed on many medications, such as steroids, anti inflammatories, muscle relaxers, and antidepressants. Xrays showed narrowing of my spine, but nothing could explain the constant and continuous pain everywhere else. The word 'fibromyalgia' has been thrown around, but the suggested treatment is just more of the same. I was told about kratom in a back pain support group. People were always talking about their pills, usually narcotics. What symptoms get you what prescriptions, etc. It was a sad place to be. I ordered kratom, completely skeptical, out of desperation. As I stood in my bedroom, crying over a pile of laundry that I couldn't fold, I placed my first order with overnight shipping. CAN YOU IMAGINE BEING IN TOO MUCH PAIN TO FOLD A TSHIRT? Kratom has picked up where medicine left off. There was nothing else the medical profession could offer me. I'm still under medical care, and I still receive regular check ups, blood work, and occasionally physical therapy. I still have pain, but I am working and living again. I'm active. I cannot imagine going back to crying over laundry again. Its simply unimaginable to be left with a life like I was living. It wasn't worth living. Sincerely, [REDACTED], MA

I am a 35 year old female. Fitness and health is my life. I started using kratom about three months ago. It is the only substance that gets rid of my monthly menstrual cramps, it relieves severe PMS and I use it for pain management related to workouts. I also have found it to be the best substance I have ever used for anxiety, and social anxiety. I am not a drug user, I am very healthy and I run obstacle races for fun. I am currently attending grad school for herbal medicine to earn a master's degree in science. Kratom is what gave me the motivation to start this endeavor. I do not depend on kratom to live, but kratom enhances my life greatly. I am truly my best self on kratom. I am focused, determined and resilient naturally and kratom brings out the best of those qualities.

CONFIDENTIAL

My name is [REDACTED]. I'm a 46 year old Father from [REDACTED] MI and I'd like to voice my concern.

Kratom has helped me control my anxiety and depression disorder to a great degree and has helped me to completely stop my use of alcohol any illicit drugs and lose 40 pounds. My doctor is impressed with my progress and the fact that my blood pressure is now in the healthy range also due to kratom use. In fact it is better than it was when I was in my 20's. My life is much more stable for myself and my children now thanks to it after over a year of responsible use. It is as safe as coffee and abuse potential is non existent, the worse that can happen if too much is taken is that you will get sick and may vomit..

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important medicinal uses and has changed my life, so I'm asking you to please help stop this bill. Please do not try to Schedule this drug until more research can take place, this is in no way a synthetic or dangerous substance and has safely been used by Buddhist monks for thousands of years.

Please do not fall prey to the propaganda, such as deaths and getting "high" that have been put out by Pharmaceutical companies that will lose the deadly grip they have on the American population with deadly and addictive opioids and other drugs.

My name is [REDACTED], I'm a 37 year old chronic illness/rare disease patient, a wife, daughter, sister and mother of 3. I started having life altering symptoms at the age of 18 and slowly declined over a decade before I received a correct diagnosis. At that point I was pretty much bedridden, had missed out on my young adult life, isolated myself from friends and most importantly, my husband and children missed "ME".

My condition is endocrine so I can't choose alternatives for the bodies master hormones I must replace to stay alive. Patients with my condition are often left weak, severely fatigued, unmotivated and lacking the overall feeling of well-being. Synthetic hormones (prescription) can only do so much. Research has shown that Ritalin and antidepressants can help us. I tried many antidepressants and stimulants but didn't feel like myself and hated the side effects.

I found Kratom in 2012 and immediately felt better. I was happier, I no longer needed to nap 3 times a day, I had the strength and energy to play with my children and most importantly I felt as close my old self as I will get. I have used the same strain and dosage for at least 4 years. Without Kratom I'll end up back in bed sleeping my life away. My husband will pick up the slack, my children will miss their mom (my youngest is 15 months) and I'll have to live my life wishing others wouldn't hurt if I were just put out of my misery.

I had more faith in our government. I feel like I'm in another less fortunate country or a bad dream. Please don't take away the one thing that helps so many and harms so few (if any). I want to remain a productive member of society. I shouldn't be FORCED onto disability.

My name is [REDACTED] and I am 61 years old. I am a wife, a mother, a friend, a grandmother, a Christian, and I take kratom. No one chooses to live a life in chronic pain. I am not gifted with words, as a matter of fact, my illness often makes it difficult to put my thoughts clearly. But for this life giving, gentle herb, I will attempt to tell my story.

In 1992 I thought I had suffered a work related injury. Repetitive actions lead to pain that quite often made it impossible to work. Later it was determined that I have fibromyalgia, and a host of back and neck issues. I wish I could name them all. Years of doctor visits, following every instruction the various doctors

CONFIDENTIAL

gave me from medications to massage, physical therapy, acupuncture, I was finally told there was nothing more that could be done. Everyday was, and is, one lived in pain. Until I found kratom. It was briefly mentioned in a fibromyalgia support group. Taking it has been a Godsend. With narcotics, the pain never stopped. Yet with kratom, I have days that I forget that I have these illnesses. It truly has been a miracle for me. I have always lived my life "naturally". Choosing organic foods, dietary supplements, etc. Being careful what I put in my body. I take kratom in its powdered form, mixing it with a bit of orange juice. Within moments, the pain is gone. I have no side effects with kratom, only pain relief and the thrill of living my life again. I have been able to go for walks and even hikes with my husband, cook again, clean house--simple things that most take for granted. Please help me continue to live my life productively and healthily. Please help us stop, or delay the ban on kratom in the US.

My name is [REDACTED] & I'm 46 years old. I've suffered from depression my entire life. At 15 I was prescribed ritalin along with prozac. By the time I reached my 21st birthday I was a full blown alcoholic addicted to a host of prescription medications. Suicidal thoughts loomed through my head daily nevermind the fact that I now had a marriage and a baby. I made countless visits to a psychiatrist and doctors only to be PRESCRIBED MORE MEDICATION THAT DID NOT WORK.

In 2005 I found myself desperate for change and I quit everything cold turkey! The next 6 years were a fog and I found myself sleeping all day with no quality of life. I found kratom through much research. The results for me taking kratom were out of bed, out of pain, and the depression was at bay finally! For the first time in my life I was happy & productive part of society. I've been taking kratom since 2011 and NOTHING ELSE! If the ban goes through I will eventually go back into a depression and be in physical and emotional pain. I vaguely remember my life without kratom but now expected to deal with the ban from a tree leaf. I don't want to go back to that life but I know myself well enough that all the old symptoms of depression will come back. Life without kratom means a life with depression because i will not go back to the men in white coats for their laboratory pills when my creator has left me a leaf to take care of all of it! My inherent right!

I'm a 51 year old woman living with Fibromyalgia, Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy and other conditions. I use kratom for chronic pain and it gives me great relief that prescription pain meds don't offer.

I'm a 47 year old wife, Mom and Grandma. I use kratom to help with my RSD, Depression, Anxiety, insomnia, nerve pain, herniated disks, PTSD, social anxiety, muscle spasms, arthritis, chronic fatigue and regulating my blood pressure. I was on countless pharmaceuticals and endured painful injections on a regular basis and it didn't help any. With pharmaceuticals I was unable to function and became a zombie. There's about 2 ½ years that I don't remember much of because of all the meds they had me on. I started searching for an alternative that was less harmful for my body and state of mind. I've tried many things and kratom is the one that works best for me. It is the only thing that helps with the nerve pain. My overall health and state of mind improved dramatically. I have been taking kratom for over 2 ½ years now and I can't imagine life without it. It allows me to control my pain and gives me the energy to get up and moving. I sleep way better and my thought have become more positive. It doesn't leave me in a fog or high at all. It actually clears my head and allows me to function somewhat "normal". Before I found kratom I had lost all hope and the burning pain was eating me alive. I would lay curled up in ball crying and wishing for death. Kratom gave me my life back! The prospect of returning to that state is absolutely terrifying! I love where I live, my family is here. But if I lose kratom we are seriously considering moving out of the country. I shouldn't have to choose between my health and my home. I have seen kratom help people get off of dangerous drugs and regain control of their life. I have seen it help with chronic migraines, Fibromyalgia, Lyme Disease, Addiction, ADHD, depression, anxiety and so much more! And it is safe. You take too much you puke. And it tastes gross so the kids won't want to get into it and if they do, I'm confident it won't hurt them, unlike dangerous pharmaceuticals. My body responds better to plant

CONFIDENTIAL

medicine and I choose kratom. Please don't take my quality of life away by allowing this ban to go through.

My friend just got back on Adderall for anxiety because of this ban. Within a week she passed out while driving and totalled her car and got a DUI for driving on prescription medication. Kratom never did this to her

My name is [REDACTED]. I am 35 year old father of two young children I work full time and live with my partner, the mother of my two children. I have been on one medication or another since I was 14. I also starting drinking and drugging around that age. I have suffered from severe depression and social anxiety as well as temporal lobe epilepsy. For many years I drank very heavily since no medication I was prescribed ever worked for me. I couldn't hold jobs, I got in trouble with the law, I was a degenerate basically. I also became addicted to opiates around the age of 21 and this led to many many years of struggling with my addiction. I was a true blue drug fiend, shooting whatever I could find into my vein and doing any substance I could get my hands on. I was a legit danger to society with no cares but to get high and get there quick. My struggle resulted in me losing both my children and my partner I ended up on the streets shooting heroin, smoking crack and suicidal. In the past two years I have been able to get off the streets, get off of all hard drugs/prescriptions got my family back together, get an apartment, get a car, thrive in my workplace (a cook at the head of a line in a very busy restaurant) and combat my depression and anxiety. Without a strong, loving and supportive partner, and Kratom, none of this would be possible. I am not willing to let this plant go without a hell of a fight. It is a life saver. And trust me IT DOESN'T GET YOU HIGH. I WOULD KNOW!

I started taking Kratom for Depression and anxiety. I was on pharmaceutical antidepressants for 25 years and still was not living a happy life. I was actually miserable and couldn't care less about life. Even with prescription drugs, I would not shower or brush my teeth, sometimes for weeks! I was beautiful yet didn't care that I was rotting in a mental prison that was physically paralyzing.

In November 2015, a friend suggested that I try Kratom to help with my depression. I can't even begin to tell you what Kratom has done for me....It has given me a life that I used to dream about, a life that never existed for me, a life that I thought I could never have! 2015/2016 has been THE BEST YEAR OF MY LIFE, I have traveled, reconnected with family and friends, began living a healthy lifestyle of Clean eating, exercise and spiritual well being! None of the prescription pills ever brought me this close to happiness. Big Pharma and Doctors have had 25 years to get it right..they FAILED ME. Now it's my turn to get it right...AND I DID!

Since word of the ban on Kratom, I decided to finish up what little bit I had in preparation for the Scheduling. I did not taper down, I did it cold turkey. I had no withdrawals, no cravings and no suffering. I'm sad to say, day 4 without Kratom. I quickly returned to my natural state, staring into space, completely disconnected, expressionless and exhausted, while being TRAPPED in the memories of such a great year and FEARING I will never experience life like that again. I do not have to live this way, I've found a plant that changes my existence for the better..This is MY LIFE THAT I'M TALKING ABOUT and IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT I'M HAPPY!

I deserve better for myself and I have found better for myself but as of October 1st 2016, I will either be a criminal or severely depressed. I ask that you consider ME and my well being when you choose to support or oppose keeping Kratom legal. Please sign the Pocan/Salmon Dear Colleague letter! - [REDACTED]

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Support of Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 4:50:07 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 31-year old math teacher from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have used Kratom for back pain for the past 3 years. This plant has also helped me tremendously with anxiety as well.

I suffer from acute anxiety and back pain. This life saving plant has made it possible for me to live my life again. I have stopped every kind of medicine, including anxiety meds and painkillers ever since I switched to Kratom. I don't ever want to go back to painkillers or anxiety meds!

I was able to finish school and become a math teacher. Without kratom I would not have been able to do that. Kratom is by far a much better and safer alternative than any opioid prescription, and I am speaking from experience. I have never experienced withdrawal symptoms and it has helped me get my life back on track.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

---(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: To Whom It May Concern.
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 1:49:51 PM

My name is (b) (6) i reside in Miami, Florida and i am 30 years of age.

I would like to voice my opinion and continues support on Kratom, which has helped me tremendously fight withdraws and has also helped manage my chronic pain in which i live with day in and day out. Kratom has gave me back my life, without this plant i honestly do not know what would the future hold for me. I am in complete disagreement with the Federal Drug Administrations on their recent campaign and announcement mentioned on November 14th.

I invite for the federal agencies to educate themselves and furthermore look at recent studies and the 8 Factor Analysis done by Dr Jack Henningfield, PH.D, vice president of Research, Health Policy and Abuse Liability at PinneyAssociates. Jack concluded that there is "insufficient evidence" for the DEA and FDA to ban otherwise restrict under the Controlled Substances Act.

<https://www.amerikratom.org/science>

There are many more medication out there that are killing Americans daily. We fear the incorrect scheduling of Kratom would increase these numbers, since millions of responsible Americans consume Kratom daily for its benefits and help with their chronic illnesses, like myself coup with our daily activities.

My conclusion is simple, Kratom is safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits which has changed my life. The fear i live with daily on the actions of the FDA will only lead me to depression and god knows what else.

Further questions or answers can be seen here <https://www.amerikratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to our country. We, the people hope you take into consideration our needs.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Urgent - I support Kratom staying legal
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 3:22:25 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 36-year-old mother and business owner from (b) (6) I disagree with the FDA and their recent smear campaign against the natural herb Kratom. Kratom has helped me and my family tremendously and I pray that you will not make Kratom illegal. This plant has and is helping millions of people that are suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions. And it is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. Scheduling it on the same level as heroin would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came upon Kratom because I was looking for natural pain relief options to replace my prescribed medication of Vicodin for my sciatica and severe back pain. When I found Kratom I was able to get off Vicodin completely. It also has completely relieved my severe depression. Kratom has been essential in helping me live a functioning, healthy, successful life with two small children and a thriving business. Before Kratom, I was unemployed, dysfunctional and severely depressed and it really affected my life and family. Kratom has been a lifesaver. And I have had zero side effects.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have children please consider how you would feel if you had chronic severe pain that causes severe depression and could not take care of your children. That is what would happen to me if I didn't have this natural herb.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Please consider all the people's lives that will be detrimentally affected if you make this natural herb illegal.

Thank you sincerely for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

--

Warmly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Urgent Please Read
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 6:23:06 AM

My name is (b) (6) and I am 30 years old. I firmly support Kratom and I am against the FDA's recent attack and smear campaign on this plant that is helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions as well as safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. Placing it on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin will end further research which has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. Kratom saved my life. I suffered from severe anxiety, insomnia, and chronic pain. I was coping with that with Doctor prescribed opiates, benzo's, Doctor recommended NSAID's, and even self medicating with alcohol to help me sleep. That ended up putting me in the ICU for 3 weeks, 2 being sprang in a medically induced coma, with total heart, liver, and kidney failure. I put on the transplant list for a new heart, liver, and kidneys. Luckily my body recovered and I was discharged and luckily was blessed with an intro to Kratom. I have used it every morning for almost 3 years to treat severe PTSD from nearly dying, anxiety, insomnia, and chronic pain. Since then I have not taken a single drug (prescribed or OTC), drank an ounce of alcohol, and now have a clean bill health. I continue to succeed at work with 2 promotions, I proposed to the love of my life, and I am finally happy/pain/anxiety free for the first time in 15 years. I don't know how I will manage if this is taken away from this community. I'm terrified to have to resort back to addicting prescription opiates, benzo's, and PTSD medications which almost killed me on Father's Day almost 3 years ago. I have no had ZERO negative side effects with this plant and will stand by it til I die. I am living proof that kratom is a natural and safe alternative to addicting and life threatening pharmaceuticals and has given me my life back. I know many people who OD'ed on opiates/opioids and legitimate medication trashed my vital organs and I could have joined them. With out access to this plant I will be back where I started 3 years ago and people will potentially die. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the government and FDA

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Voicing my support for Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 10:39:50 AM

Dear Mr. Commissioner,

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I suffer from panic disorder, ADHD, and PTSD and have been prescribed benzodiazepines for the past 12 years. I have been able to completely go off from benzodiazepines and stimulants with the use of kratom. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom and I will likely have to go back onto stimulants and benzodiazepines.

I ask that you listen to the voices of the citizens that have gotten their quality of life back due to this botanical supplement. Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me A lot I am an inescapable read
Date: Friday, November 24, 2017 11:30:54 PM

I just wanted you to know Kratom is super safe. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "Kratom is remarkably safe for any substance used by millions of Americans." I know for A fact the American Kratom Association sent you the Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD 8 Factor scientific study on Kratom. Please read it 10 times like your favorite book ever. It proves kratom is safe with sound science.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You Love Reading Me Best ♥ Reading All Of Me is inescapable
Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017 9:52:31 PM

I truly believe kratom is safe. I really believe God gave me kratom to help me manage my health and well-being. Nothing works as good as kratom. Everything else either doesn't work, has drastically more side effects or both. I have taken kratom for about A half decade, I identify as A masterfully advanced responsible adult kratom consumer and I never experience side effects from kratom ever, and I truly believe I don't experience withdrawal at all from kratom ever. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD and one of the world's best experts on addiction and abuse liability definitely once said, "Kratom has A remarkable record of safety and low abuse risk for any substance used by millions of Americans." The difference between the safe benign kratom that helps me manage my health and well-being extremely well without side effects that has been proven to be safe with sound science such as the Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study and the Jack Henningfield PhD 8 Factor scientific study and the November 14, 2017 FDA public health advisory on kratom has many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated claims about kratom that is extremely concerning to me. I masterfully formally request that FDA's public health advisory on kratom be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected as it does not meet the standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the quality of information they disseminate to the public and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: about Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 1:29:14 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

I wanted to write a brief letter and voice my support for Kratom. I am a 38 year old male from (b) (6). As it has been widely reported, our country is in the midst of an opioid epidemic. Kratom has been proven to help people with withdrawal from heroin and other opioids. It is crucial that the Kratom plant remains legal and accessible for the people of this country. Vilifying it will only hurt our country and its people further. Thank you for listening.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: COMMENT - (b) (6) - 11/26/2017
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 9:04:04 PM

Dear Dr. Scott Gottlieb and the Food and Drug Administration:

My name is (b) (6). I'm 22 years old, working towards a master's degree at the (b) (6), and work full-time as a content creator for various sites across the Internet.

I'm a responsible adult who consumes Kratom - a member of the coffee family, Rubiaceae - to improve my mental and physical health and general welfare. I strongly urge you to rethink your stance on Kratom, scientific name *Mitragyna Speciosa*. Please look to the innumerable testimonies of persons that consume *Mitragyna Speciosa* for maintaining their health and well-being.

Kratom regulates my bowels, as a sufferer of Irritable Bowel Syndrome, primarily with Diarrhea, and also maintains my mental health, as one with Generalized Anxiety Disorder.

I love Kratom. I hope it becomes regulated as a Dietary Supplement, or remains unregulated, as it currently is.

Thanks for reading,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Contact FDA
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:44:52 AM

<https://www.fda.gov:80/FDAgov/AboutFDA/ContactFDA/default.htm>

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I was watching "Meet the Press" a few weeks ago, listening to an interview concerning the "Opioid Crisis". While I agree there is a problem in our country, no one has addressed how this has affected thousands of severe chronic pain sufferers, like myself, whose only respite from a life of constant debilitating pain is taking one of the opioid drugs on the market. People in pain are taking their own lives every day, due to doctors refusing to prescribe narcotic medications that could give them some kind of relief. I have severe osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, degenerative disc disease, with extreme neck pain, neuropathic pain, a torn meniscus in both knees, spinal stenosis and fibromyalgia. Several years ago, I wore a Fentanyl patch, took Vicoprofen and Tramadol. When you have true pain, these drugs don't get you "high". While my pain was still evident, these drugs "took the edge off", enough to allow me to hold a job and live a halfway normal life. Since the climate has changed regarding the prescribing of opioids for chronic pain, I now cannot hold a job. I am on Social Security Disability, which is not enough to live on. The stress due to living in virtual poverty, only adds to my pain level. There are thousands of chronic pain sufferers that benefit from taking opioids. These are responsible people, not looking to get high. We're only looking for relief. Are we addicted to narcotics? No. We are "dependent" on them to allow us to work and be productive citizens.

I recently learned about the many benefits of Kratom and decided to give it a try. There are several different varieties available. Some work better on pain, some are better for anxiety relief. I have tried a few. NONE OF THEM GOT ME "HIGH". One variety in particular however, did help slightly to relieve my constant severe pain. You must understand that chronic pain sufferers are simply looking for a way to reduce their level of pain.

I IMPORE you, PLEASE do not make Kratom illegal now. Show me a drug and somewhere there will be someone who abuses it. That is NOT me. That is NOT the millions of chronic pain sufferers. My life has taken a downward spiral, ever since the availability of opioid painkillers were taken away. Don't take Kratom away now too!! I will reiterate, we are not seeking a "high", we are seeking RELIEF! I recently watched a wonderful documentary series on President Kennedy, who was also a chronic pain sufferer, in addition to having Addison's Disease. His personal physician injected him with opioids in order for him to be able to stand up straight and carry on his duties as President. I believe it was his brother, Bobby, who warned him about the effects of opioids. JFK responded, "I don't care if they inject me with dog piss, if it works". Speaking for myself and I'm sure other chronic pain sufferers, we agree with JFK. WE JUST WANT SOMETHING THAT WORKS!! Opioids work. Kratom works. Please don't take them away! I appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Continue Kratom Research
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 1:03:47 PM

Hello,

I am a 21 year old who was hurt in a car accident a year ago. As a result, my kneck, shoulders, and hips, as well as various muscles all around my face stay locked up and it's extremely painful. It causes really bad migraines. For a long time life became a struggle for me. I work full time, but I felt unable to give work my full attention. Some days I was too hurt to work my usual 8-12 hour shift. The meds I was prescribed did not help very much but I took them as prescribed anyway. Eventually my short term memory became clouded. I would walk into a room and forget what I needed at least 3 times a day. I also became irritated all of the time. I suddenly felt like I always was on edge ready to freak out. I would have these freakouts and I would be so scared all I could do to calm down was hurt myself until the physical pain changed my temperment from angry to sad.

A friend told me they use a herbal remedy called kratom for migraines and they offered me some to try. The kratom wasn't a drug per se. It was just leaf powder and it reminded me of green tea. The first time I took it I couldn't believe how I felt. Suddenly all of my muscle pain was just gone. I could walk around, ben over, etc. without being in pain. I also felt very calm and my usual anxiety (which attribute to the meds) was gone. I didn't feel out of my head anymore. A few days later I did some quick research on the internet and found a reputable company who lab tests their kratom. Lab testing is important because like any harvested plant, mold, e coli, and heavy metal presence are all real possibilities. I went through with the order and then over night I cut my medication dose in half with no side effects like I had been anticipating. Two days later I cut the dose in half again and the next day I stopped taking them completely. It's been well over a year med-free. Since then I have had the energy to show up early for work every day. In fact I got promoted to a management position which I attribute to having access to kratom. Any physical pain I do have is manageable, and I just feel happy to wake up in the morning and I go to sleep relaxed at night. If I don't take kratom, my pain comes back and I get a runny nose. Otherwise, I do not experience side effects from taking it often to help with pain.

If kratom is scheduled, I will no longer have access to this safe herbal remedy. Kratom is not killing people like we are being told. The 36 reported deaths have been exposed by a private investigation to be caused by co-morbid drug use. If this is taken away from me, my quality of life will be crushed. Even my psychiatrist understood that it helped me. She knew how my prescribed meds made me feel and in her professional opinion was glad kratom was helping me.

What the country needs is kratom to be regulated and tested, and we need research done to understand all of its many alkaloids. Americans should have access to research and should be allowed to make decisions for themselves. If kratom is scheduled, this will not happen and many people will suffer.

Please help our cause

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Don't Ban Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 9:06:13 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 48-year old student from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came to use Kratom after reading in an online forum about the energy and relaxing effects of its use. I tried it ordering powder online from a reputable source and it has made a noticeable difference in me. I suffer from Meniere's disease, which is an incurable inner ear disease that causes vertigo, headaches, and blurred vision and these symptoms come and go with little to no warning. I have been to a doctor and there is no medicine that does much to ease the symptoms or cure them. I carry motion sickness pill everywhere I go just in case I get an episode. I have been dealing with this just over a year. I started using Kratom this past summer and it really helps with the anxiety about my disease and calms me since stress is a trigger for episodes to occur. I also take a variety of supplements that I also found online and the synergistic approach seems to be working for me

For me, Kratom means I have energy to help get through the day and it keeps me calm so I avoid symptoms of my disease. I am a full-time student at a local University and I also work part-time at a nearby warehouse. I feel I am symptom free and can pursue my goals with the combination of supplements and Kratom that I use daily. Please do not take this away from me.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, and will cause my symptoms to possibly come back. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom.

If you have questions about Kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA attack on kratom!
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 7:03:10 AM

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was a plumber for over 25 years and have had surgery on both knees twice, suffering chronic pain which led me to this wonderful God-given plant that helps me with my pain. Unfortunately I became one of the countless opioid victims with addiction. Kratom actually helped me with the ability to wean myself off of all painkillers.

Since using this wonderful God-given, natural plant, I can now get out of bed in the morning without having to wait until the pain in my knees subsides. Taking this plant away from me would cause me to once again seek narcotic pain medications to deal with chronic pain!

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @yahoo.com
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA Making Haste Decisions Regarding Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 12:04:27 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 47 year old mother of two. I support my husband in his auto body business. I lost my daughter, (b) (6) over two years ago due to this opioid epidemic. She got addicted to oxy contin that was flooding the streets before anyone was knowledgeable of the dangers. I never had a chance to warn her when she was so young. She battled until she was 28. (b) (6) told me about kratom 2 weeks before she died. It was not enough time for her and I to realize what a divine natural aid this plant actually was. I truly regret not looking into this sooner for her. I'm confident she would still be here if I had believed in kratom sooner.

I now use kratom for the emotional pain that I will have for the rest of my life. I have been drinking my kratom with orange juice for almost 2 years. I drink it every few hours all day long. It gets me thru each day without feeling so lost. I do not notice any side effects. Meanwhile, I drink much more than the recommended amount I've researched on the internet. There is absolutely no respiratory depression with this natural herb. Also, if I forget to have some, I don't notice any withdrawal symptoms. Just the pain of losing my daughter gets louder.

I strongly believe this would be a huge mistake to restrict this plant from people. We need more people to learn about kratom so their lives can be saved or improved.

If we really want a solution to this epidemic, then more people should learn about the benefits of kratom. God put it on the earth for this of many reasons. The solution to this opioid epidemic is not a path to make more money. It's a true solution!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE Tablet

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Fighting to keep kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:12:47 PM

Hi my name is (b) (6), I am 22 years old a mom of 3 and my partner is (b) (6) we are from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Now I know from experience that kratom helps with opioid addiction as I myself and partner both are recovering addicts! We have a rough life growing up being beat, sexually assaulted numerous times, being abused, taken into care etc and at 11-12 years old we got into drugs and alcohol. I of which grew out of it I thought, had to kids etc but left a very abusive relationship! I had gained horrible anxiety to the point I shake/twitch in my bed, I developed severe depression disorder, and I turned back to drugs but worst. I got into meth and painkillers along with other medication and alcohol. I had to give my kids to my mother because of my life going downhill.

We are now a year clean this Christmas Eve from meth and coming on 6 months from painkillers. All thanks to kratom! It helped us with withdrawals, help with my anxiety and we had recently got hit by a car not long ago and instead of me taking a lot of painkillers and getting hooked again I am taking kratom!

I know my opinion doesn't matter much but I hope you guys take it into consideration! Ask this helped us so much and can now proudly say we are recovering addicts of 6 months and 1 year. :) cheers

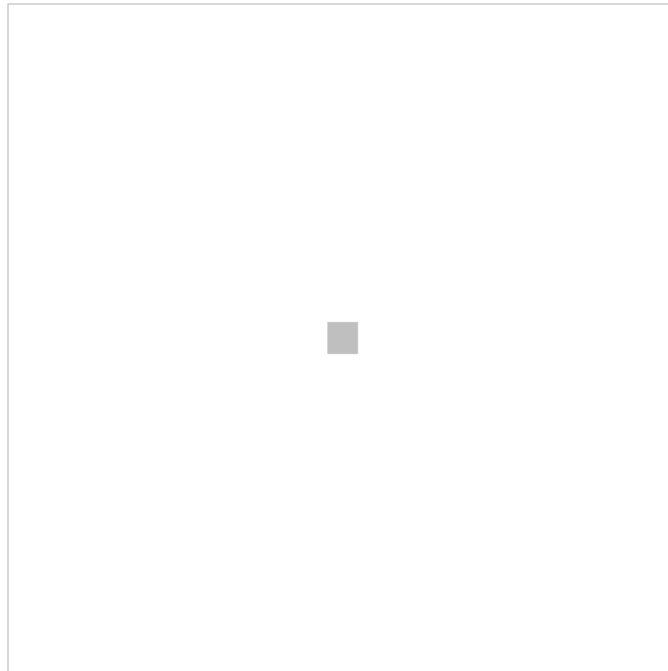
From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Fwd: BEA's Response to the FDA's Cautionary Kratom Warning
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:18:43 AM

(sent from MY iPhone)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Botanical Education Alliance <ryan@botanical-education.org>
Date: November 28, 2017 at 9:05:39 AM EST
To: (b) (6) @me.com
Subject: BEA's Response to the FDA's Cautionary Kratom Warning
Reply-To: Botanical Education Alliance <ryan@botanical-education.org>

[View this email in your browser](#)



"Our mission is to increase understanding in order to influence public policy and protect natural supplements".

Response to FDA's Health Advisory Concerning Kratom

A Winning Strategy for Today and Tomorrow

***Proven excellence in protecting that which matters
most, your right to choose***

Dear Kratom Advocate,

In response to the [latest FDA comment cautioning against the dangers of kratom](#), we kindly issue our response.

Please keep reading below for our full statement..

Dear FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

We DO NOT support the FDA's contention that kratom is an "unapproved drug" with regard to the kratom products that are currently in the market place.

The FDA reports that the agency has "exercised jurisdiction over kratom as an unapproved drug." Language from the agency over the past three years, though, indicates that the FDA views kratom as a dietary supplement. Kratom is a plant leaf from a tree indigenous to Southeast Asia. It is in the coffee family and can be used to promote general well-being. It not a synthetic drug nor is it an opioid.

See the Original Red Alert:

https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/cms_ia/importalert_1137.html. In fact one company has submitted their New Dietary Ingredient notification with full safety data.

We DO NOT support the FDA's statement that there are "significant safety issues associated with [kratom's] use," nor do we agree with the claim that kratom was the cause of recent deaths.

Dr. Sawyer, a renowned Toxicologist reviewed the deaths up until September 2016 and his conclusion was that not one of the deaths could be attributed to Kratom. We plan to conduct a full review of all alleged deaths from September 2016 until present date to show that most involved other drugs and could not be attributed to Kratom alone.

From the FDA's Health Advisory: "Calls to U.S. poison control centers regarding kratom have increased 10-fold from 2010 to 2015, with hundreds of calls made each year."

A CDC study of 660 "case mentions" of kratom falsely indicates "significant safety issues" with the plant. These "case mentions" are situations in which kratom was mentioned. They do not mean that kratom was solely responsible for the call to poison control.

With the help of the CDC report, we have crunched the numbers to discover how pervasive kratom cases are within the National Poison Data System. We compared the CDC kratom statistics with the total number of poison calls recorded each year, as shown in the 2014 Annual Report of the American Association of Poison Control Centers.

Below we have the graph from the kratom CDC report for calls per year:



Here we have the calculated the data by dividing the total number of kratom-related case mentions per year with the total number of all poison related calls in the NPDS per year.

Each Year	Total Number of Kratom Related Poison Calls*	Total Number of Poison Related Calls	Percentage of Kratom Related Poison Calls
2010	26	2 384 825	0.001%
2011	15	2 334 004	0.0006%
2012	98	2 275 141	0.004%
2013	108	2 188 013	0.005%
2014	155	2 165 142	0.007%

*Total Number of Kratom Related Poison Calls is an approximation of the CDC graph seen above

The percentage of calls to poison centers from 2010-2014 regarding Kratom constituted only 0.004% of total calls (rounded from 0.0035%). While kratom-related calls have increased since 2010, they clearly do not come in at a frequency that would indicate a “significant safety issue.”

Kratom doesn’t kill people, and to date there has not been one death attributed to kratom alone. The FDA claims that they are “aware of reports of 36 deaths associated with the use of kratom-containing products.” But, evidence indicates that these deaths were not caused by kratom:

“The most recent (2014) information collected by the U.S. National Poison Data System, and published in the journal Clinical Toxicology, shows no deaths whatsoever from dietary supplements across the board or any other dietary ingredient.”

All documented kratom-related deaths can be attributed to poly drug use, where substances – including prescription pharmaceuticals as well as illicit drugs – other than kratom were also found during the

autopsy.

Also if we look to a world expert in this field such as Dr. Steven Karch's book on the subject of forensic studies you will find that it is extremely difficult to attribute the cause death for an individual when they have multiple products in their system.

"You can die from a drug and you can die with a drug," says Karch. "When you have four orders of magnitude separating either end of the curve, many of these deaths may not have to do with drugs at all."

To further this point "A second complication in cause-of-death findings is what medical examiners call "postmortem redistribution" which is the shift in detectable drug levels that occurs after a person dies, according to Fred Apple, medical director of clinical laboratories for the Hennepin County Medical Center in Minnesota. Many drugs that may be contained in fatty tissue in a living body are released into bodily fluids after death, which confuses the analysis of substance samples taken postmortem".

Scientific study has proven that mitragynine will not cause respiratory depression, which is how most opiate overdose deaths occur.

In 2013, Scientific American asked Edward Boyer, a professor of emergency medicine and director of medical toxicology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, took a look at whether kratom should be deemed dangerous. His answer illustrates a key difference between kratom and opioids: "When you overdose on these drugs (classic opioids like hydrocodone), your respiratory rate drops to zero. In animal studies where rats were given mitragynine, those rats had no respiratory depression."

The BEA believes the FDA should have presented this information in the form of a notice to companies in violation of regulations. We support the FDA sending notices to companies that are making therapeutic and drug claims about kratom products.

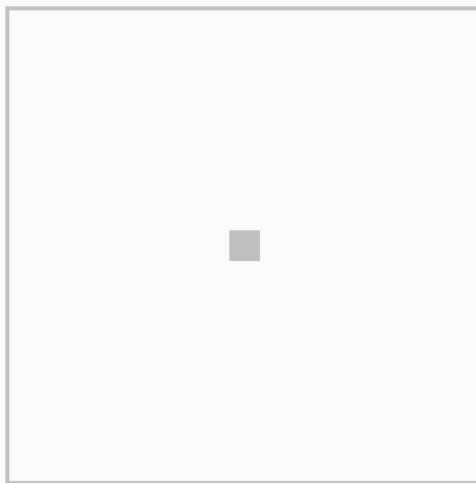
The recent Health Advisory states: “The FDA knows people are using kratom to treat conditions like pain, anxiety and depression, which are serious medical conditions that require proper diagnosis and oversight from a licensed health care provider. We also know that this substance is being actively marketed and distributed for these purposes.”

The Botanical Education Alliance supports the proper labeling and marketing of kratom products.

Companies that have product names related to drugs and claims that Kratom treats or cures any disease must cease and desist immediately as in any industry we are only as good as our least ethical product.

Our organization is committed to ensuring a responsible kratom industry that prioritizes the health and safety of consumers.

With Gratitude,
Ryan & Angela



Our mailing address is:

Botanical Education Alliance
1900 THE EXCHANGE SE
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30339

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Fwd: Kratom saves lives....please don't keep it from us!
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:16:52 AM

(sent from MY iPhone)

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6) <[@me.com](#)>
Date: November 19, 2017 at 4:34:16 PM EST
To: CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov
Subject: Kratom saves lives....please don't keep it from us!

Commissioner,

Please consider the number of deaths via opiates has no relevance to Kratom. I'm sure by now you have received a whole lot of emails in support of Kratom. This one will probably never be read. However, I'm compelled to address this issue! Kratom has been part of my daily routine for almost a year now. I stopped medicating myself via methadone (80mg) after battling an opiate addiction brought on after knee surgery 13+ years ago. I've been a first responder, a private pilot, a farmer, an (b) (6) certified law enforcement officer and a father of 3 wonderful adult children. Had I not found "raw Kratom" I never would have survived as I would have surely died using rx meds. Kratom is no more deadly than coffee and I've seem to have 1000's of witnesses to this. If public well-being is truly your concern, then out law prescription meds, what consume a multitude of lives every minute of ever day! Kratom has been a life saver!

Please keep our Kratom legal and do not allow big-pharma to profit from such a miracle plant!

Thank you!
Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Fwd: Kratom saves lives....please don't keep it from us!
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:17:46 AM

Please read!! You are going to hurt a lot of people. If you've had anyone in your family that hasn't used Kratom for addictions and/or physical, mental anguish, you need to reconsider your stance on Kratom!

From: (b) (6) @me.com>
Date: November 19, 2017 at 4:34:16 PM EST
To: CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov
Subject: Kratom saves lives....please don't keep it from us!

Commissioner,

Please consider the number of deaths via opiates has no relevance to Kratom. I'm sure by now you have received a whole lot of emails in support of Kratom. This one will probably never be read. However, I'm compelled to address this issue! Kratom has been part of my daily routine for almost a year now. I stopped medicating myself via methadone (80mg) after battling an opiate addiction brought on after knee surgery 13+ years ago. I've been a first responder, a private pilot, a farmer, an (b) (6) certified law enforcement officer and a father of 3 wonderful adult children. Had I not found "raw Kratom" I never would have survived as I would have surely died using rx meds. Kratom is no more deadly than coffee and I've seen to have 1000's of witnesses to this. If public well-being is truly your concern, then outlaw prescription meds, what consume a multitude of lives every minute of every day! Kratom has been a life saver!

Please keep our Kratom legal and do not allow big-pharma to profit from such a miracle plant!

Thank you!
Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: How kratom has saved my life
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 9:35:41 AM

My name is (b) (6),

I'm a 35 year old from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about kratom a few years ago searching for natural medications as I've been on 22 synthetic pharmacy medications over the years. I'm diagnosed with autism, PTSD, and nerve damage. It's very rough making it without cannabis oil that a US Marine got me years ago to show me there was hope for my condition as I've wanted to just die and stop suffering. Kratom is saving my life right now. Kratom works much better than the gabapentin and pain pills I've been on. I have had 2 friends die from opioid overdose also. I feel like after 22 synthetic medications that all failed I have earned the right to natural remedies. I'm very tired of this battle and it makes me sad to see people fighting against the one thing keeping me going and realizing it's because of money.

Cannabis and kratom are safe drugs with health benefits. Why do we only have the options of alcohol and tobacco that kill so many people each year? I don't want to keep suffering like this and without kratom I will have no hope. The PTSD flashbacks are SO HARD to deal with. I was abused as a kid I think because I was seen as weak from the autism. Cannabis and kratom are the only things that have worked. In 20 years, 22 medications. I can't make it without either of these. It's not trading an addiction for an addiction. But even if it was, we need safe drugs.

Please don't fight against kratom and the American people. Kratom hasn't ever hurt anyone but saves countless lives. How many more have to die from pain pill overdoses while we have something that works better without the risk of death? Millions die from alcohol, tobacco, and pharmacy pills and no one has ever died from cannabis or kratom. Please don't let the pharm industry do this; please trust the 1000's of people who are alive today because of kratom. I'm 35 and very tired of being in a bed 24/7 in pain. Please don't take away the only thing keeping me alive.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. I'm already suffering not being able to get cannabis oil (the low thc kind that doesn't even cause a high, I have zero interest in getting high; I just want to get to neutral from all this pain!!!). Please stand up and fight for the people. Be the good guys, we need our government to be for us and not against us. Thousands more will end up dying without these two natural medications God made for people.

God didn't make mistakes with cannabis or kratom. I'm a Conservative Christian and I've been praying for cannabis and kratom every day. Be the hero Americans need. It's saved my life personally. Nothing else has worked but kratom and I've been fighting for my life for decades with

bad medications that caused more problems. We don't want to be lab rats anymore; please let us have the few things that do work that are safe and natural.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you,

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: How Kratom saved my life
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 5:45:54 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm 29 years old from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I began using and growing Kratom about 10 years ago. I was addicted to heroin and other prescription opiates. I tried using Suboxone at first, which does help some with opiate addiction but it didn't work for me. Since Kratom has both mild opiate and stimulant like qualities to it, depending on dosage, I decided to try it. Not only was it very effective at keeping away the opiate withdraw symptoms, the mild opiate effects from it satisfied my cravings enough to help me wean off of actual opiates altogether while not feeling high. Over time, I lowered the dosage and with each step down, the effects became less opiate like and more like coffee. With each decreasing dosage, I became more eager to live a full and productive life and to not waste it away. After about a year of this, I became completely opiate free and stopped using Kratom daily as well, without any major withdraws or side effects.

I stopped using Kratom for a couple of years after I got clean but when I later became sensitive to caffeine, and I couldn't consume it without getting vertigo, I began taking Kratom again on a daily basis, in low doses as an alternative to caffeine. Not only does it make me more focused and want to go to work everyday, it doesn't give me the side effects that caffeine does and all around makes me feel healthier than consuming caffeinated beverages.

I also gave Kratom to other people that had opiate addictions and chronic pain and got to see it change hundreds of other peoples' lives for the better. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

--- (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I use "Kratom" as an anti-diarrhoeal medicine for Ulcerative Colitis. Please help!
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 6:40:17 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

I wanted to quickly share with you my experience using "kratom" leaf as a medical treatment. As someone with Ulcerative Colitis I struggle with my digestive system daily. It even got so bad a couple years ago that I almost lost my job over it. Then I found kratom. I've been using kratom ever since as an anti-diarrhoeal medicine to help me be able to do a full day's work, and not spend the whole day in the bathroom. I've read that kratom had been used to treat chronic diarrhea for over 1000 years in southeast Asia and I can tell you that it works for me where all other treatments have come up short. I make good lifestyle choices to lessen the symptoms of my incurable bowel disease, but without kratom my quality of life would be much worse. If the FDA successfully contributes to making kratom (or it's alkaloids) illegal in the USA I will be one of thousands of Americans who currently rely on this plant material that will be forced in to an immediate personal health crisis. Please help me keep the normalcy of a life where I, as a 31 year old man, DON'T need to wear diapers whenever I leave my house. To be frank, pooping my pants makes me feel intense shame & sadness while completely ruining my day. Kratom becoming illegal would cause me to feel that shame & sadness much more often.

Kratom has also helped tremendously with my Psoriatic Arthritis. Psoriatic Arthritis has no cure and causes inflammation & pain in all the body's joints at the same time. So it essentially causes debilitating pain across my entire body. It is a degenerative disease, so the pain will only get more debilitating the longer that I live.

I've suffered with these 2 incurable medical problems for years, looking for beneficial medical treatments the whole time, and I have never found anything that treats them better than kratom. Dr. Gottlieb, please tell everyone in the FDA/DEA that kratom has successfully been used as medicine for years in the United States of America and because of that it (and the alkaloids it contains) can not be declared an illegal drug.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

PS. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have about my experience using kratom as an anti-diarrhoeal medicine to treat my Ulcerative Colitis.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: IMPORTANT, PLEASE READ! (Kratom ban)
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 8:13:06 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 31-year old woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started using Kratom about 6 years ago due to suffering from debilitating panic attacks, anxiety, and depression. I have tried countless prescriptions for these problems and they have only made me worse. I researched different NATURAL ways to combat my problems and came across Kratom. It is not intoxicating in any way and has helped me through the hardest times of my life. Kratom gives the people who use it a better quality of life. I am able to take my three year old daughter out in public places, I am able to work with the public without having panic attacks. I feel overall the best I have in my entire life and it is all due to Kratom.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. Many lives will be lost without Kratom. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: In Support of Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 12:25:11 PM

Please do not schedule Kratom the same as LSD and other narcotics. It has provided me with an alternative to more invasive opioids. It has helped improve my health and well being. I'd hate to see it be taken away from people who prefer it to opiates.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 1:51:05 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 37 year old mother of 3 who suffers with chronic ulcerative colitis pain, Endometriosis and ovarian cysts. Kratom has helped me get through my day without side effects. This is a supplement and should not be in a category with narcotics. Lots of us who suffer pain do not like taking a narcotic drug, this is a healthier alternative. It is no way compared to the horrible side effects of a narcotic drug. Please take this into consideration.
Thank you (b) (6) 11/28

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom LEGAL
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 2:26:32 PM

To Whom it May Concern: My name is (b) (6) And I'm an addict in recovery from opiate painkillers. By the Grace of God I've been free of opiate use for over three years, thanks in part to Kratom. For seven years I had a twenty tablet a day habit of injecting Tramadol's ; I was introduced to this demon by my GP for persistent sciatic nerve pain. Currently I'm clean! Am a fifty six year old retired RN of 30 years; I lead a decent, responsible life thanks in LARGE part to Kratom; along with NA and my Higher Power's blessings. I urge you to please reconsider making this life-saving substance LEGAL and accessible to thousands of ppl like myself to rely on Kratom for remaining painkiller-free and/or for alleviation of chronic pain; it is a lifesaver. It surely saved mine as well as countless others. Sincerely (b) (6) .

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 2:01:40 PM

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 49-year old woman from (b) (6)

I would like to explain my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA's recent anti-Kratom smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. Such an action makes about as much sense as illegalizing coffee.

A ban would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. You should also be aware that Kratom is a safe and effective way to get off of opiates without having to turn to something equally loathsome such as suboxone. If the FDA is serious about preventing opiate overdose, then you should welcome kratom with open arms because of this fact.

Many Americans like me are able to work, care for their children, and have normal lives because of Kratom. Without it we would either be addicted to illegal drugs to deal with chronic pain, or we would be completely disabled and unable to be productive citizens. It is impossible to get adequate treatment for pain in the USA ... EXCEPT for Kratom. It is both mean-spirited and not in America's best interest to take that away from us.

I've had arthritis since my early twenties. I have tried every NSAID known to humankind. They only help a little and are terrible for the stomach and liver. A friend introduced me to kratom. Not only can I get through an 8 hour workday now, I can also go to the gym and exercise rather than letting my body deteriorate because of the daily pain. Think about it: why would you want to take worthwhile lives away from thousands of people? What if this was your life, or your mother's?

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 6:48:53 PM

Hello my name is (b) (6) and I wanted to let you know why kratom must not be made illegal. One it's a natural herb used for thousands of years and much safer then over the counter pain pill like Advil and so on. There is so many people who have used it to get off of drugs and change there life. I will be writing and signing all forms to keep this legal. Thanks and have a good day...

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:42:51 PM

Scott Gottlieb,

Hello my name is (b) (6), I am a 48 Year old female who has been using kratom for the last year to help with my chronic back pain. I had previously been prescribed opiates over 5 years but found that it was hindering my daily activities from the effects of the opiates that were making me feel "out of my mind" and I found myself taking much more than prescribed and having to buy them off the street. The opiates were not helping with my pain much.

I went to a naturopathic doctor who gave me information about kratom and I did a lot of research online and weaned myself off the absurd amount of opiates that I was taking. Kratom is a natural, plant based product that helps with my chronic pain that has helped me more than the opiates ever did and it does not make me feel "out of it" like the opiates did.

I have several friends who were in the same boat as me and now we can actually function to a better degree with the use of Kratom.

Please keep kratom legal in order to help others and help this damn opiate epidemic that is taking over the country.

Kratom has helped a lot of people yet the FDA wants to regulate it because it cuts into the money from big pharma, PEOPLE ARE IN NEED OF NATURAL ALTERNATIVES, KEEP KRATOM LEGAL!

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal.
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 9:17:13 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 47-year old wife, mother, and grandmother, plus caretaker to my elderly mother, along with being receptionist from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia a few years ago after suffering from years of chronic, terrible pain, where on some days I couldn't even get out of bed. It was difficult to take care of my children, my home, my pets- this was before I worked outside of the home. As is the usual treatment, I was prescribed Lyrica and muscle relaxers to deal with my pain. My husband was given notice that he would be losing his job, so I sought employment, and found part-time work for my chiropractor, and became a receptionist. When I first started, there were days that even on the Lyrica and muscle relaxers, I would just sit there in misery, trying to figure out how to get through the 4 hour shift that I had. Then, I heard about Kratom. I started researching what it was, and where to find kratom, and found support groups on facebook. Thus has been my journey with kratom. I honestly do not know what I would do without it. I no longer take Lyrica or muscle relaxers, because when my husband lost his job, we lost our health insurance, and we could not afford the \$700 a month for my prescriptions. I rely solely on kratom.

Since I have been taking Kratom, I have taken on more than double the hours at my job- and I now work 6 days a week. I also take care of my elderly mother, and the acreage my husband and I have. I am more active now than I have been in years- thanks to kratom.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 12:47:35 PM

I am firm supporter of kratom and believe the smear campaign against this useful, safe, and effective plant is unwarranted. I urge you to please keep kratom legal, or if not then unimpeded, the government at all levels you have influence over.

As America face an opioid epidemic, I can attest to the many people who have been helped by this life-saving plant.

Please do not take this plant away from us.

Thank you for your time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 9:09:52 AM

Good morning,

I am emailing you this morning regarding kratom becoming a schedule 1. Kratom is a natural plant found in asia and has been used for thousands of years. Not until recently has it has a bad rap. 36 deaths? None of those have been linked to kratom alone and even if they were 36 deaths out of thousands of years? More people die from tylenol.

I am asking for your help as a representative. I am a 37 year old mother of 4 who works in the medical profession. My anxiety was so bad i wasnt able to leave my home. Due to kratom my life has changed. I am able to function normally. I am not afraid of social interaction anymore. I have more energy for my crazy life. This plant has saved me in ways I cant place into words. Please use your voice to stand up for the thousands of people who have had their lives forever touched from this natural plant. Thank you for your help and your time.

(b) (6)

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S7.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 10:33:12 AM

My name is (b) (6). I am 32 years old and live in a small town in (b) (6). I would like to voice my SUPPORT of KRATOM and ask that you do further research and retract your statement and the potential ban on our miracle plant. Banning Kratom is not only going to hurt its users, it will kill some. Unfortunately some of us, including myself cannot go back to using pharmaceutical medications due to addiction, and we also have chronic pain conditions needing pain relief. Kratom is a safe alternative. Even the non addicting pharmaceutical pain medications have significant side effects and at 32 years old with a young child, i am not willing to risk using those medications.

I found kratom over a year ago, when diagnosed with fibromyalgia and arthritis. I had already been dealing with severe pcos and carpal tunnel and I had just had my second hand surgery and as a recovering pain medication addict, those medications were not an option for myself. My insurance company wouldn't cover some very expensive medications that my doctor wanted me to try and the one that it did cover, put me in a trance. I felt foggy headed and my memory suffered. I couldn't take it and had no other options. So i did my research and found Kratom. I immediately felt relief without any mind altering side effects. I was able to function and now am able to work full time, go to school full time and be a full time single mother. Without kratom, i would be practically bed ridden and completely miserable. I've been through the ringer with drug addiction and refuse to turn back to the embarrassing and almost deadly ways of my past. Kratom has given me my life back and it has given my son, an incredible mother. Please don't take that away from him.

Just like other kratom consumers i urge you to please reconsider.

I fear that many lives are at stake here because for some, kratom is the ONLY option. Kratom is a safe alternative to deadly pharmaceuticals and if take this option away, tragedy will follow.

Please visit <http://www.americkratom.org/> and help us instead of hurt us.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 9:11:29 AM

You need to listen to these voices. These people are not addicts. Please, educate yourself on the benefits of kratom and how it helps people. It's not in the same category as heroin. Far from it. Please, listen to people, read about kratom. I have chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, and clinical depression. Instead of popping pills, like the government doesn't want, kratom is the answer. I fully believe you don't know people's lives until you are in their shoes. Just let people live their lives. Thank you.
Sent from my iphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:44:14 PM

Commisioner, my name is (b) (6), I'm 55 yrs old and have suffered with chronic pain since 1987 when I fractured my neck after bring hit by a drunk driver..In the 30 yrs I've dealt with not only the pain from the original injury, but as time passed I developed Degenerative Disc disease, Fibromyalgia, widespread osteoarthritis. In 2009 I had an extensive neck surgery which included cages and rods. I was put on numerous pain meds, opiates, muscle relaxers, steroids they all worked for a time..but after time I became immune, I refused to go any higher on dosage..for fear of where does it end? I was put on Fentanyl in 2004 when Drs were on the news going on about how people's pain was not being addressed, at that time I knew this would end badly! Now here we are. I'm the past two yrs I've had the only muscle relaxer I could tolerate taken from me..which led to sleepless nights, I grew very frustrated with a medical community that three up their hands and said " sorry (b) (6) but the powers that be,DEA, FDA won't let us give you relief..my next choice was going to be nevermind, I'll quit pain mgmt and head to the local liquor store..never did it, I know better. Then I started reading up on Kratom, really researching it. I started using it responsibly, I was able to quit fentanyl completely, and the beauty of it is, it treats my pain without me feeling out of sorts..I've slowly started to come out of my house again and actually make plans. A year ago, I couldn't get out of my own way! Always fighting the opiate fog. I'm writing this to you not to be confrontational or get on a soapbox, but to help you see, please we live in the " Land of the free" we as adults should be able to choose what works for us. Kratom is not half as dangerous as Alcohol in my opinion, so with all of the people in America today who are trying to get their lives back from opiates, please keep Kratom legal! My story is alot longer but I won't more you with that, just know, I am a responsible adult who have up on life, Who thought, this is as good as it gets for me, for many yrs..my life has been given back to me thanks to a low dose of an herb God put on this planet, let it be! Thankyou for your consideration. Sincerely, (b) (6)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:49:08 PM

Mr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) I'm 58 yrs old and a Navy veteran from (b) (6)

I am showing my support for the legality of Kratom. As you know, since you are a doctor, that opiate addiction is rampant in the US. Kratom has helped thousands of people through the withdrawal of opiates. How many people die daily from opiate use?

I'm not writing because of opiate use, however. I just want to share my simple story with you.

I have arthritis in my knees and back. This year the pain has increased and has affected my mobility and daily life. Kratom makes it possible for me to get around. I can tell if I haven't had my protein smoothie with my dose of kratom. Another thing, kratom tastes so nasty nobody takes this stuff because they want a high. It's a horrible taste!

Kratom is a safe alternative to big pharma drugs. It has benefited thousands of people for many years. If Kratom is banned, it will lead to more deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic.

You can find more information and scientific findings at <https://www.americkratom.org/>


Please allow Americans a choice in how we fight our pain and addiction withdrawals.

Thank you

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 6:58:45 PM

I am writing to ask that Kratom be kept legal. 10 years ago I had a kidney transplant which resulted in Fibromyalgia. I was prescribed Lyrica Gabapentin, and Cymbalta to help with at different times to try to cope with the symptoms without results and often times negative side effects. I did not feel that there was anything that would help. One year ago I tried Kratom and found that my symptoms have resolved. There are many, many people that have been helped by this plant. As you know, opioid addiction is at epidemic proportions. This plant is saving people's lives. Please consider that everything we do affects someone else. There will be a time that we will all answer for our actions. Do the right thing. Keep it legal! (b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 7:41:24 PM

To whom reads this email,

Please keep kratom legal. The CDC guidelines left me without pain control for my disease called Adhesive arachnoiditis. It's one of the most painful conditions known to man. Yet after nearly 1.5 years, I still don't have a doctor willing to prescribe me pain medications that actually work. I don't expect to be pain free, just to be able to get out of bed and care for my family. I expect quality of life. Doctors have refused to offer any type of quality of life. Kratom has given that to me! Without it, I'd be bed ridden and unable to do the simplest of tasks. For myself and millions of others responsible adults, chronic pain patients, and yes recovered addicts, I encourage you to fight to keep this plant legal!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 7:57:06 PM

> Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

>

>> Hello I've been using kratom for over 3 yrs without 1 bad side effect and have chronic Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and all the co infections. It is the only thing I've found that helps manage all the symptoms of my diseases and it's truly been gift from God! For the past 32yrs doctors have tried every pharmaceutical that they could think of to manage my illness since I was diagnosed with these diseases and only made my conditions worsen with all the harmful side effects from the prescription drugs. My body is truly starting to heal since I've been taking kratom and even doctors are truly amazed at how much it's helped me. When I skip a dose of kratom I don't get thrown into anything kind of withdrawals like I would if I skipped my pain meds , mood stabilizers, sleep meds and others that were horrible to try to stop. With kratom there was none of those consequences so I feel much safer with kratom!! My neighbor is 75yrs old and hasn't left her house in over 10 years due to back pain. She takes excessive amounts of opiates without relief. Two weeks ago she tried kratom, and last week she went on her first vacation in more than 10 years. She said she feels like she's 40 again without feeling high all the time from the meds she was taking. She and many others including myself are finally getting to enjoy life again symptom free and finally feeling normal. I know doctors, lawyers, people with diplomatic immunity, specialists in the military, cops, ranchers, and everyday people that agree with me and are amazed how well I and others are doing because of KRATOM.

>

>> Thanks for taking the time to read this,

>> (b) (6)

>>

>> Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 8:17:08 PM

Hi,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a college graduate, pharmacy technician and mother of 2. I suffer from hypermobile ehlers danlos syndrome and I have pain daily from doing common , everyday things. Kratom has saved me from so much! I do not have to sit in a pain clinic, I do not get high and foggy headed like when I take a pain pill. When I take a synthetic drug like Hydrocodone, I get fuzzy headed and I text people and buy things online and don't remember later I did it. I hate taking manufactured drugs. I don't respond well to them! Kratom gives me the pain relief I need and keeps my head clear! It's common sense to give people access to a safe alternative that is highly effective. People are committing suicide Bc they can't get the pain relief they need due to the war on pain meds. Why can they not have a safe alternative when their physicians fail them? Kratom is safe , it's been around for several hundred years and MUST be kept legal!

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 2:18:20 PM

Hello there, my name is (b) (6) I am a 30 year old female from (b) (6) and I just came across some disturbing news articles regarding Kratom and I wanted to send you some additional information in the hopes that you can understand the misinformation that is circulating. I have seen a press release by the FDA regarding Kratom and I am very concerned. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

As you know, Kratom is a plant that grows in Southeast Asia, a relative of the coffee plant. I have been consuming Kratom for more than four years. I did not begin taking it to curb any opiate related issues. Kratom has many benefits and is not exclusive to addicts and honestly I'm tired of seeing that be reported because you'll only attract addicts to Kratom, they'll find out it's not something they can get high on and either go back to their opiates or get clean with the help of Kratom.

Kratom can NOT get someone high, it has an opioid receptor agonist and an opioid receptor inhibitor, making the body unable to consume more than a small amount. Cheese and chocolate have an opioid receptor agonist, for reference on how common this can be. I, and thousands, potentially millions of Americans are as dependent on Kratom as we are on coffee, except that if Kratom gets taken away from us many of us will die.

I suffer from ptsd and desperately needed to be available to my child and partner. Coupled with therapy with a trained professional, I have gotten my life back. I run a successful business, i have two employees and contribute monthly, quarterly, and annually to Uncle Sam. I am present for my son and help out in his class like I always wanted to, I feel safe in my skin and while I don't credit Kratom with all of that, I do believe it has helped me immensely- more than any psych med I was ever given- and I could not be where I am without it's help.

I urge you to do some more research and look for the scientific data that is stacked against the negative press. I urge you to look at the evidence the American Kratom association has compiled. I have also included a link to a compilation of scientific data regarding Kratom along with press releases... this includes a 127 page 8 factor analysis independently conducted by Pinney Associates last year, discussing its extremely low potential for abuse... please take a look. I would like to add that the

DEA has asked the FDA for an 8 factor analysis on Kratom at least twice and FDA has yet to produce one. Peoples lives are at stake.

https://drive.google.com/drive/mobile/folders/0B_SMhCuwVcKjZ3p0amk4ZXpmSzg

Respectfully,

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 1:51:28 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 27-year old male from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started using kratom in (b) (6) after struggling to remain sober and attending in-patient treatment. I learned about it from a friend who told me about it's benefits and safety in comparison to prescription painkillers and heroin. I was a drug addict for almost three years prior to taking kratom for the first time. Since I took it for the first time I haven't relapsed on any opiate or used any other drugs including alcohol and marijuana.

I used to be unemployed, living off my family's income, stealing and selling my belongings, and performing other illegal activities to support my drug habit. Today, I'm independently living in a different state, employed by a Fortune 500 company, have a great relationship with my significant other, and have an apartment of my own. The legality of this plant had a great influence on me getting to this point.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have any questions about kratom, please visit

<https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 11:03:12 AM

Attention:

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD [20993-0002](#)

Dear Mr. Scott Gottlieb, M.D.,

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 29-year old female from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions (and also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally), on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. It's benefits are endless. One example is Kratom's success in treating mental health disorders; which is my reason for using Kratom.

I first discovered Kratom 3.5 years ago when a good friend suggested I try it to treat my severe anxiety and panic attacks.

I've suffered with debilitating anxiety and panic attacks for nearly all of my life. This made social situations unbearable for me. It also held me back in my career, in the medical field, because it was difficult and nearly impossible for me to interact with those around me. Because of my anxiety, I was prescribed an SSRI called Citalopram. At 40mg's daily, this aided my panic attacks, but also made me numb. It took away my zest for life. Since taking Kratom, I have been able to taper off the Citalopram and use Kratom exclusively for treating my anxiety. I have little to no side effects, and I feel like a healthier version of myself. And better yet, it is a naturally occurring plant. It is the supreme alternative to dangerous pharmaceuticals.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 2:40:56 PM

To whom it may concern

My name is (b) (6) and I can't stress enough how much it helps me!
I shattered T12 in a accident in 2007 and I'm left with a excruciating pain from my waist down. I tried all the pain medication this beautiful country have to offer at the and of the day does not help, and besides I got addicted to it. I am 56 now and I never ever used any illegal drugs until my accident. With the pain medication from the doctor I will need to have at least 16 Percocet per day doctors only gives me 4 a day. My point is I don't want to de addicted any more where Kratom it does the kid at a 5 grams 3 times a day. To be honest with you if it will make Kratom illegal, with what the doctor is prescribing me is not enough so I'll be forced to go to Street drugs. The pain is so intense that I can't concentrate to absolutely nothing else. Please don't take a product out that it helps me and others like me. Thank you for understanding!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 5:51:33 PM

To whom it may concern,

I've been in healthcare for nearly 25 years and I appreciate the FDA/DEA's attempts to keep everyone safe and healthy. However, I believe both agencies are incorrect when it comes to Kratom. Kratom is an excellent dietary supplement that provides an overall sense of wellbeing. I've seen this unique plant be beneficial to many, many people and I've never seen any ill effects from the plant. I'm asking that you take into consideration how many people have been helped by kratom and how many people could potentially be helped by having access to this plant in the future and keep it legal. Many, many people have benefited from kratom and I would hate to think that these hard working, upstanding members of society would be without access to this dietary supplement that has proven time and time again to be so beneficial. I'm asking you, on their behalf, not to make kratom illegal. We need to join together and work to make American a healthier nation utilizing the many tools that we have at our disposal including those produced in nature. Our goal should be to make American healthy again and we can do just that if everyone works together. Taking away access to a plant that so many have been helped by seems counterproductive. Please keep kratom legal.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 6:10:59 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6) I'm a Female, 60 years old from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

While looking for an alternative treatment for my Fibromyalgia I heard about kratom from my chronic pain patients Facebook group.

I suffer from many conditions including: Fibro, CFS, Migraines, PTSD, Insomnia, Anxiety, TJM, RLS and have OA with Dish. I was on 15 prescriptions including many many pain pills. After drinking Kratom Tea do 5 years, I have since been able to stop All medications. My blood pressure has even returned to normal.

Kratom has literally given me my life back. I am no longer in Emotional, mental and physical pain. I am no longer sitting on the sidelines of my life. I can show up and be an active participant in every day life. This is a dramatic turn around from previous years.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit
<https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 10:22:28 PM

As an adult kratom user, I feel the need to tell you my story.

I am a 58 year old mother of 4 and grandmother of 5 and kratom has made a huge positive change in my life.

I have what is called a cavernous hemangioma bordering my right parietal lobe and temporal lobe that is inoperable without rendering me paralyzed on the left side of my body. I take 2000mg. of Keppra a day to stave off seizures, but was still having a lot. Because I have a seizure disorder, taking ibuprofen for pain is out of the question, so for about 2 years I was given a prescription of hydrocodone for peripheral neuropathy and arthritis in my lower back. I didn't like all of the side effects of the hydro, but the pain was making it hard to have any good quality of life. After 2 years of taking it and still having a large amount of break through pain, I stopped taking it because I didn't feel it was worth taking. So I went the next 2 years without any pain med and was pretty much bed ridden. I was miserable and felt like throwing in the towel because I couldn't contribute to life in any way at all. Then I was researching ways to handle pain and ran across an article about kratom. While I had never heard of it before then, I had to give it a try. After all, it was natural, God given if you will. I ordered some and when I first tried it I was hopeful, but skeptic. I took about 3 grams of the green powder with some coffee and within 30 minutes I was able to move my arms , legs and back freely. I honestly couldn't believe it. I was so excited that I had to show my husband that I could move without pain. He was happy for me because he knew how badly I felt for years.

Now, as much as I love the pain relief, I am also excited about the fact that I have been having less seizures since I started taking kratom. I'm not sure if it's because, without so much pain, I sleep better and in turn getting more sleep is staving off more seizures, or if it's some other aspect of kratom that is slowing them down. All I know is that although it tastes like ground up grass, it has given me back a normal life. It doesn't make me feel weird, and I wouldn't know what it feels like to be "high" because I never used recreational drugs. It just takes the pain away...period. At my age it's a blessing and the thought of it being banned or made illegal seriously makes me want to cry. I don't understand why it's such a big deal. It's natural. Natural is always better than something man made, right? Seriously, if kratom is being demonized, how long before we start doing that with other things we have used for many many years like milk? It's natural and has good qualities that help our bodies. I mean, where does all of this end? After everyone is hooked on prescribed medicines that cause more harm than good? It's just not right. There aren't people dying all over the place from kratom. But there are many many people dying from medicines that doctors prescribe. Why don't you do something about that? Why take away one of Gods gifts to us to help ourselves? Please, just listen to everyone. Kratom users are not using it for fun. We use it for pain, for seizures, for nervous issues, for sleep and many people that are addicted to some horrid drugs out there use it to wean themselves off of it. That's a GOOD thing. How can you not see that?

Anyway, I just wanted you to hear my story and maybe it might help. Kratom is not dangerous. Prescription drugs ARE.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 4:39:54 AM

My name is (b) (6), I am 35 years old for (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I discovered Kratom one day at the store I always go to. When I was buying a drink the owner which I always see said "in pain again?". I said yes, the owner then got some Kratom powder and handed me some research on it, I was sold. After that day I was glad the owner showed me Kratom. Most of my ailments I suffer from is chronic lower back pain. When I was 20 years old I smashed my tailbone snowboarding. I was given perscription for gabapentin 400 mil 4x a day. They helped some of the time, I would deal with the rest of the pain. I have been dealing with a bad back for about 15 years in that time I have built anxiety from those pills because of the mental need of the pills. I was introduced about 2 years ago to Kratom and it has helped me a 1000 times better than my meds ever did, mental and physical. I have been able to quit taking those dreaded nerve pills. Being introduced to Kratom and it various kinds, has given me my life back by being able to get rest, eat, and to be a great father and husband again is amazing in itself. I am able to do the work I love which is asphalt. I don't have to miss work or rely on pills to get me through a rough day anymore. If this wonderful plant was introduced to me before I was put on nerve pills I would pick Kratom. That's why I deeply, deeply believe it should be available to all walks off life with no problems. I strongly believe that Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I FEAR this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victim's of the opiate epidemic. It will lead me back to the pills which I FEAR so much. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom. If you have any questions about Kratom, please visit

<https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely, (b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 9:43:23 AM

Hello,

"I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

Feel free to contact me

Thank you

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 11:23:17 AM

Hi my name is (b) (6). I have been suffering from fibromyalgia for 30'years. It is a disease that has no cure. It causes all over pain, anxiety, depression, insomnia among other things. I was on many different prescriptions that had negative and addictive side affects. I weaned myself off of them and started taking Kratom. I can tell you honestly that Kratom has had nothing but a positive effect on my well being. Everything that is being said negatively about it is absolutely false. It does not make you high nor is it addictive. It actually helps my pain and my other symptoms. I sincerely hope it does not become banned for my own well being as well as others.

Thankyou

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 12:06:20 PM

Dear Commissioner, I am a husband and father of 2 children, before all of that started I was hooked on oxycontin from a surgery. I spent 10 years on suboxone and am recently clean because of kratom, I tried to for three weeks cold turkey but the withdrawal from suboxone was terrible. This is after weaning myself down to a quarter of a milligram a day. Kratom is nothing like oxycontin and it is nothing like suboxone. It gave me my life back after 12 years of opioid addiction, I don't know the real reason behind the upcoming band of this herb but I do know it saves lives cause it saved mine, I have a respectable job and a great life, please reconsider this band because heroin and other drugs will not stop

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 12:57:57 PM

I will be brief. I was on legal pain meds, which became so expensive, I decided to quit. To understand how much opiate I was taking daily is hard to believe. Again, this was all legally prescribed, although, now I see how irresponsible I and the pain doctor was. Altogether, I took about 500+ mgs of opiate daily, some in the form of 100 mg time release capsules formulated at the pharmacy. I was able to stop everything except the methadone, which I had gotten down to 30 mgs daily. I tried several times, and tried several online remedies. I heard about kratom while reading some posts, and thought I would give it a try. I started with small doses, and at about 2 tablespoons, or in capsules, about 8 400 mg capsules, I stopped the methadone over a 3 day period with no noticeable side effects. This was 4 years ago, and I will admit, because of pain still, I keep kratom as a backup to ibuprophen, but only use it a few times a week to relieve my back pain. As I had tried so many other herbal concoctions and remedies, kratom was amazing. I consider it safe, and probably safer than most over-the-counter pain medications. I have never had a negative side effect that I can relate to kratom. The only suggestion might be education for someone trying it for the first time. But, seriously, even with dosing instructions on over-the-counter medications, how many people still end up in the emergency room for various reasons. Please consider the greater good, of thousands of opiate addicts with a chance to change their lives at a reasonable cost. Thank you, (b) (6) age 65, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 4:07:19 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 50-year old woman from (b) (6). I'm also disabled due to Fibromyalgia, RA, DDD and Spinal Stenosis. I also suffer from depression, anxiety and panic attacks. And I take Kratom to help with the symptoms of all of those issues.

I'd like to voice my opposition to the DEA and the FDA's apparent intent to ban Kratom and Schedule the alkaloids Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine, which would make Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*), a schedule 1 controlled substance with no medicinal value. This would put kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions, that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I consume Kratom to help treat my fibromyalgia, Degenerative Disk Disease, and Arthritis. Kratom also seems to help my anxiety and depression issues by uplifting my mood. I don't feel high or even euphoric when I take it. I do feel at ease and focused on the important things to do on a daily basis. It eases my pain so that pain is not on the forefront of my brain and I can focus on accomplishing my goals for the day. I found this treatment through Chronic Pain support groups on Facebook and lots of factual research. I have used prescription medicines for years with little to no result. Those medicines kept me in a fog for almost 12 years, as well as contributed to a large weight gain. Due to the weight gain no surgeon will attempt to do a back surgery, so I suffer with pain everyday. Kratom makes it bearable. I'm disabled and haven't worked in almost 8 years due to my pain. Kratom has given me some of my life back. I have taken Kratom for 3 years, now. I am currently only using Kratom, Chinese Cats Claw, Incarvillea and a multi-vitamins daily, as opposed to Cymbalta, Gabapentin, anti inflammatory drugs and various opiate pain medications. I am not able to work but, I am able to enjoy my life a little more now. I'm working toward my goal of losing weight and have managed to reach half of my goal over this last year. And I am able to reasonably take care of my family now. A year and seven months ago my husband and I were faced with having to take guardianship of our 3 year old grandson. Do you really think I want to risk the doors being kicked open during dinner and having him watch them drag me away in handcuffs because I'm an illegal drug user? But, that's the choice they're giving me. Go back on the pills that make me feel horrible, damage my liver and will eventually put the KILL in painkiller or break the law and risk destroying my family. Or do nothing and be too incapacitated by pain to take care of them. What would you have me to do? What kind of choice is that? To make Kratom illegal would mean I would go back to sad state of depression and pain that I worked so hard to climb out of. I think it should be an option for those who suffer as I do to be able to treat themselves with natural plants and what works for them. That is what America stands for, the freedom to choose.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important medicinal uses and has changed my life. I fear a ban on Kratom will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit www.americkratom.org. Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 5:17:53 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 38 year old living in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent negative press!

Kratom helps over 2 million people for all types of reasons. It also helps ease withdraw symptoms of hard drugs and prescription drugs. does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I first learned of Kratom through addiction support groups. I have used kratom during a withdrawal from hydrocodone it helped me ease my mind.

I no longer use Kratom or Hydrocodone but I can tell you from my experience (about a year) I was not addicted because it isn't addicting - does not bind to receptors. I was able to get my life back and safely withdrawl from hydrocodone due to Kratom.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. The FDA will only lead to more deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic,

If you have questions about kratom, please visit they can articulated it better than I can.

<https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 6:18:31 AM

Hello, please don't ban kratom I was once one of big pharmas favorite people. Because i was addicted to pills. Ive been clean for years but i suffer from migraines, headaches, arthritis and more. So i need something that will help me but want change how i act(like opioids do) or cause me to be addicted. Im a mother and hard worker. I take kratom when needed and i dont get a buzz nor does my behavior change while on it. It helps with my pain without all the side effects of pain pills. My grandmother is on two heavy painkillers and she's still in pain, plus shes completely different and completely addicted. Please don't make it harder for us to get kratom. I owe life's are hard enough.

Sincerely,

(b) (6) or mom

From: (b) (6) @gmail.com on behalf of (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:09:06 AM

Dear Sir,

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 44-year old CEO who runs multiple successful companies in (b) (6), has 3 degrees from (b) (6), and a devout Lutheran with a young family.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Three years ago, I was in a debilitating car accident which sent me to the ER and then required multiple surgeries and treatment with massive doses of opioids to manage pain. After attending an Easter service, I determined that I needed to find a better way to deal with chronic pain and researched alternative medicines when I encountered kratom. I was reluctant to try it, but did so, and it pretty much saved my life.

Given my background in tech and science, my in-depth research into Kratom has led me to understand that this natural plant is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Sincerely,

(b) (6), CEO

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:16:25 AM

Hello there,

I hope you're having a truly wonderful day. My name is (b) (6) and I am 24 years old. I suffer from chronic depression and extreme generalized anxiety. I have seen doctors and therapists and have been prescribed medicine to treat them aka numb my emotions, take whatever money they can, and make it even harder to get through the work day. I have been taking Red Bali Kratom for over six months, two capsules every 5-6 hours. Now I can actually TALK to my customers without stuttering, without worrying that I'll say something wrong. I have more energy to get my work done and take care of the animals, I work with animals because my anxiety is too intense to work with the general public and I've been hurt too many times by people. I literally prefer dogs over humans. Anyway, back to my point, why would you guys try to take away something SOOOO helpful to humanity? Because pharmaceutical companies aren't making a profit? Because politicians and CEOs are so greedy that they would make human beings suffer and ruin their bodies even more with prescription drugs? Not only does Kratom treat my mental illnesses, it HELPS opioid addicts, people addicted to LEGAL drugs that your office approves of. It also HELPS with pain in a healthier way, instead of chemicals. It doesn't have the negative effects on the liver like prescriptions medicines. America has such a problem with drugs and you guys do the opposite to help. You'd rather see addicts killing themselves and making you a profit instead of looking for NATURAL and inexpensive resources to help. Please please PLEASE Pweeeetyyyyy pweeasseeeee don't take this amazing herb away from us. We'd like you guys sooo much more if you stopped doing these sort of things. Please think about how many US citizens this herb has helped and continues to help.

Sorry for being sassy, I'm just trying to get my point across and I doubt you'll even read this anyway. You're a busy person, but I feel better knowing I tried. Have a wonderful day!

Sincerely with love,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:19:49 AM

I am a responsible adult who uses kratom to improve my well being. I urge you to reconsider your stance on kratom and look at the science in support of kratom as well as testimonies of those that have and continue to use kratom for their well being. Thank you so much for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my Boost Mobile Phone.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 12:14:18 PM

Hi- I am just writing to say- or question- why is Kratom coming up again? Didn't this happen a couple of years ago? I don't understand the controversy regarding this harmless plant. I am 48 yr's old and kratom adds value to my life. I have IBS. Please don't regulate it? Why should it be regulated when it is a supplement? Many of my supplements work better without side effects than my scripts and i prefer them. I would hate to rely on more pharmaceuticals in the future if this plant is taken away from me.

Thanks, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:14:38 PM

> Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

>

>> Hello I've been using kratom for over 3 yrs without 1 bad side effect and have chronic Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and all the co infections. It is the only thing I've found that helps manage all the symptoms of my diseases and it's truly been gift from God! For the past 32yrs doctors have tried every pharmaceutical that they could think of to manage my illness since I was diagnosed with these diseases and only made my conditions worsen with all the harmful side effects from the prescription drugs. My body is truly starting to heal since I've been taking kratom and even doctors are truly amazed at how much it's helped me. When I skip a dose of kratom I don't get thrown into anything kind of withdrawals like I would if I skipped my pain meds , mood stabilizers, sleep meds and others that were horrible to try to stop. With kratom there was none of those consequences so I feel much safer with kratom!! My neighbor is 75yrs old and hasn't left her house in over 10 years due to back pain. She takes excessive amounts of opiates without relief. Two weeks ago she tried kratom, and last week she went on her first vacation in more than 10 years. She said she feels like she's 40 again without feeling high all the time from the meds she was taking. She and many others including myself are finally getting to enjoy life again symptom free and finally feeling normal. I know doctors, lawyers, people with diplomatic immunity, specialists in the military, cops, ranchers, and everyday people that agree with me and are amazed how well I and others are doing because of KRATOM.

>

>> Thanks for taking the time to read this,

>> (b) (6)

>>

>> Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:16:30 PM

Kratom has many beneficial uses. Don't allow big pharmacy lobbyist to block this natural plant that helps so many people. Your recent analysis of kratom was deceitful and misinformed.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:21:35 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

I use Kratom on a weekly basis to help manage debilitating migraines. Removing from my life would severely damage my ability to cope with pain and lethargy, and I would most likely have to turn to a more powerful prescription drug that would have unwanted side effects. This ban WILL hurt people like me, as well as others who use it to combat opioid addiction.

This attempted ban is based on subjective, outdated opinions and attitudes, while the science behind Kratom use can provide hard evidence of its benefits. Please thoughtfully consider this decision.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:15:11 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 27-year old male from (b) (6) currently living in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have been using Kratom actively since 2014. Since using it, I have been able to come to grips with my depression and anxiety that I've suffered since I was a child. I am a regular user and I hold a job, am in grad school with a 4.0 GPA, and am in a healthy relationship with a woman who I live with. Kratom has only improved my life. Before Kratom, I drank every night, often to the point of blackout. Now, left of Kratom (Which I personally do not consider a drug) I am sober.

Now, I will meet you halfway and say that there are regulations on Kratom that can and should be done. There are extracts that are legitimately dangerous and I would not be unhappy to see those made illegal. However, making plain leaf illegal will be detrimental and will lead me and many other people who have used kratom to overcome addiction to serious substances back to the dark side. Is Kratom an ideal solution? Maybe not, but it works, and it's only done good for me. My therapist, my psychiatrist, and my parents all agree.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any other questions.

Best,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom advocate
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 10:08:36 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6). Thank you for taking the time to read my email. When I was 18 I got in accident and had severe stomach problems for a year....but it turns out because of the nerves it wasn't my stomach I had fractured my l5s1 vertebrae. All that time doctors prescribed me opiate medications (which I knew nothing about) finally I was out of pain but because of the opiate usage I went threw hell. It took years for me to get clean and even when I was clean I would be in pain. Kratom has been a life saver for me. It helps The pain without the horrible addiction of opiate pain killers. It has helped so many people with a safe alternative to pain meds and people get off addictive medications. I plead with you to keep this harmless herb legal. It is America and we should have freedoms to choose what course of action we have with our medical problems. Please don't make me go back to addictive medications, it just adds problems. Thank you for taking the time to read my story. Feel free to contact me if you want but please consider leaving this harmless herb alone.

Best regards, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and Crohn's Disease
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 8:15:20 PM

I'm a 30 year old patriotic Cyber Security major with Crohn's Disease. Kratom stops the pain without the itches and withdrawals of opiates. I don't like the way it makes me feel, but I like the pain relieving affect.

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:20:27 PM

Good morning,

I am a 32 year old mother of soon to be 3 and a chronic pain patient. Years earlier my chronic pain problem led to an opiate pill addiction issue and later turned into a full blown heroin addiction. I am 3 years clean and my pain is finally under control thanks to this plant. There are countless others like me. A life in chronic pain is no life worth living. A ban on kratom will guarantee an increase in opiate overdose and suicide. Please reconsider.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 11:16:36 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 68 year old man from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-How you came to use kratom..... (did you learn about it in a chronic pain support group, etc?)

-What ailments you suffer, what treatments haven't worked (prescriptions, surgery, etc.), how long you've been dealing with your condition, how long you've been using kratom and how many/what medications you've been able to quit.

-What kratom means to you (has it given you your life back, have you gone back to work, can you play with your, exercise or travel, etc., something anecdotal about why kratom is important and should be available).

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

--- Include your name, address and phone number.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 2:57:52 PM

I am a going women with severe non curable health issues. I wa seen by pain management for 4 years being given narcotics due to allergies to most anti-inflammatory medication. When I no longer wanted go take narcotics due to the health concerns of them I was discharged from my clinic. I found kratom shortly there after and have used it since. I have had almost no need to use narcotics since even after some large surgeries and severe injuries. Including a broken back that caused a miscarriage. Even my doctors have agreed that this is the safest and most effective option for the multitude of problems I have. If I were no longer able to have access to this I would be back to having many days of being unable to get out of bed everyday due to dislocating good and even dislocations within my vertebrae. I would likely end up backnon a wheelchair and having am extrrmaly difficult time taking care of my family. I urge you to look at the real evidence of the safety and efficacy of this supplement. It stems from the same family as caffeine in how it works in the brain. Please for all of those like us think twice and look at all the facts not just the mainstream media.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom ban
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 12:20:07 PM

My name is (b) (6). I'm a twenty four year old with a wife and two young sons. I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign to disallow the use of it. This will put kratom, a natural plant which is used by myself and millions of others to treat chronic pain, and other physical and mental conditions, in the same class as illegal drugs like heroin and others. I have been taking Kratom for years now to relieve back pain from a exercise injury. I have been to multiple doctors, chiropractors, and physical therapist's, though they helped, the pain still persists through my day. I have a job that requires lots of Manual labor and Kratom helps me get through the day without having to use stronger prescription medications that are addictive and bad for my health. Current studies have shown Kratom is a safe alternative to stronger pain medication and further research should be allowed to happen on this herb as it may be able to help the with the current opioid epidemic as well. Banning Kratom will halt all research. If you want info about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:17:43 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S®6 active, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom campaign
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 12:45:27 PM

My name is (b) (6) and a 37 year old responsible Kratom user from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign to ban this wonderful plant. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose..

I first discovered this glorious supplement via a billboard in my resident town. I noticed a sign that read “natural pain relief”. I’ve suffered from significant lower back pain for 7+ years. This caught my attention enough to go check out the supplement store endorsed by the billboard. I then went home and researched Kratom before I purchased.

I suffer from L4, L5 disc degeneration, bulging/tearing, and have for 7+years. I’ve had

steroid injection directly into the site with very little relief. I've had moderate term use of hydrocodone and Vicodin when pain was excruciating.. But clearly I can't live on narcotics, from a doctors ethical stand point, and for my personal health. I've been using Kratom for over a year now as needed for pain. This has been the absolute best thing I've found to live with this constant pain. I work as a personal trainer, sometimes 10-12 sessions per day. Kratom has been a miracle in making my pain manageable to get through my day.

I also found a HUGE unexpected benefit. I've suffered from anxiety since I was a small child. To the point that I would get sick (almost daily, dry heaving/vomiting) because of these uncontrollable nerves. I dabbled in various supplements like Min-tran and St. John's wort with no anxiety relief. Also, was put on medication (Paxil, Effexor by a physician). The side effects were worse than the slight relief I received. Since my use of Kratom, I haven't been sick(vomited) once, and my anxiety is the best it's ever been! To not be nauseated or vomit daily from nerves has been such a blessing. This may have been more of a benefit than my pain relief!

Kratom has completely given me my life back when it comes to pain management and anxiety. I can

actually feel like a normal person again. Not being sick DAILY is an unbelievable feeling. I can actually enjoy eating again. I haven't enjoy food in years. Events that normally are taken for granted by people (going to work, vacations, daily tasks) I can now manage without pain or anxiety. I've truly been given my life back.

I truly believe Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I believe that just like anything in life, responsible use and moderation is key. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom campaign
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 12:47:40 PM

My name is (b) (6) and a 37 year old responsible Kratom user for (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign to ban this wonderful plant. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I first discovered this glorious supplement via a billboard in my resident town. I noticed a sign that read “natural pain relief”. I’ve suffered from significant lower back pain for 7+ years. This caught my attention enough to go check out the supplement store endorsed by the billboard. I then went home and researched Kratom before I purchased.

I suffer from L4, L5 disc degeneration,

bulging/tearing, and have for 7+years. I've had steroid injection directly into the site with very little relief. I've had moderate term use of hydrocodone and Vicodin when pain was excruciating. But clearly I can't live on narcotics, from a doctors ethical stand point, and for my personal health. I've been using Kratom for over a year now as needed for pain. This has been the absolute best thing I've found to live with this constant pain. I work as a personal trainer, sometimes 10-12 sessions per day. Kratom has been a miracle in making my pain manageable to get through my day.

I also found a HUGE unexpected benefit. I've suffered from anxiety since I was a small child. To the point that I would get sick (almost daily, dry heaving/vomiting) because of these uncontrollable nerves. I dabbled in various supplem like Min-tran and St. John's wort with no anxiety relief. Also, was put on medication (Paxil, Effexor by a physician). The side effects were worse than the slight relief I received. Since my use of Kratom, I haven't been sick(vomited) once, and my anxiety is the best it's ever been! To not be nauseated or vomit daily from nerves has been such a blessing. This may have been more of a benefit than my pain relief!

Kratom has completely given me my life back when

it comes to pain management and anxiety. I can actually feel like a normal person again. Not being sick DAILY is an unbelievable feeling. I can actually enjoy eating again. I haven't enjoy food in years. Events that normally are taken for granted by people (going to work, vacations, daily tasks) I can now manage without pain or anxiety. I've truly been given my life back.

I truly believe Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I believe that just like anything in life, responsible use and moderation is key. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit

<https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom changed my life
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 10:33:42 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 33-year old wife, mother, daughter, employee, and tax payer from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about Kratom when trying to overcome an 18-year opiate addiction and to come off a high dose of Suboxone per day through the encouragement of a friend and support groups.

I have suffered from opiate addiction most my life because of chronic back pain. I have also had quite a deal of anxiety and depression along with mood swings that I never could find pharmaceutical medications for which did not make my conditions worse. I've tried many anti-anxiety and depression medications on the market. I have now been using Kratom for six months and have been able to stop taking any pharmaceutical medicines, including Suboxone, benzos, and anti-depressants.

I am now a full-time wife, mother, and employee at a successful job that brings me joy and meaning. I am active in my child's life, after having lost temporary custody of her due to my addictions and erratic behavior two years ago. I no longer suffer from depression and anxiety, and my mood is calm and stable. All of these things have become possible because of Kratom.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom consumer
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 11:45:00 AM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), I am a 42 year old woman, I am from (b) (6) I am writing this email in light of the battle over the herbal leaf Kratom.

I have been consuming this leaf in pure powder form, no extracts no embellishments, in pure form, as it is intended to be consumed, is very beneficial to me.

I have been diagnosed with an incurable, rare and debilitating disease as of 2011. It is Hidrenitis Suprative (HS for short) It is a disease of the sebaceous glands and anything that causes these huge glands to kick in and cool down my body, stress, heat, anxiety etc., causes massive abscess infections deep within my skin/pores. I have had over 30 cut and drains, 1 surgery under my arm and I live daily with this painful illness. Some days I cannot even put clothes on as the HS flares up resulting in infection within my pores. I was prescribed Vicodin in 2011, then in 2012 my doctor allowed me to switch to Tramadol, this alleviated 50% of my daily pain from HS. This medication did not harm me in any way, it was affordable and I was pleased. However, in approx. 2014-2015 the DEA basically took this medication from me by making it a scheduled drug, my refills were only available after a doctor visit (rather than 5 refills before physically going in to doctor) this impacted my income. See, in 2014 I was granted total disability and my doctor advised me to stop work entirely as moving around and the stresses of working was causing my HS to flare constantly. Going from 3500.00/month down to 1100.00/month caused me to lose every material possession I owned. Job, car, and home: gone.

My HS pain began starting to increase on my old dosage, from 2012, so In 2015 I came across Kratom in a YouTube video. I researched this herb and found a very reputable seller. I have been able to decrease my Tramadol dosage and increase my tolerance of HS pain due to Kratom. One of the side effects of HS is depression, due to high pain levels and constant scarring on my body. The Kratom has an anti-depressant property thus allowing me to avoid being placed on dangerous pharmaceutical drugs for depression. Also, the Kratom is affordable on my fixed income.

Please read all the stories, mine and others, and think about the facts of Kratom;1. The FEW reports of death associated with Kratom do not mention all the other substances ingested by the person, people do not get addicted and harm themselves and others in order to get a "fix". 2. The affordability of Kratom. Some pharmacy's charge 1.00/ pill of Tramadol and that would make my monthly expense upwards of 120.00, also, adding in the cost of my monthly doctor visits fee just to get my refill.

Kratom is also helpful in assisting withdrawal from heavy hitting pain medicines. I implore you to have compassion on us, the sick, the fixed-income, the disabled, and the hurting. Please allow us to freely consume Kratom, the plant leaf that allows me to have a more normal day, with lower pain levels and more peace of mind from depression.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom has safely helped my chronic pain for years
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 12:57:12 PM

Dear Mr Gottlieb,

I am a responsible 59 year old male who has been in regular pain management since 2007. After much physical therapy and attempts at spinal decompression to solve the problem FIRST, I had spinal surgery performed on my cervical vertebrae in the form of fusion/laminectomy for C-5/6 and 6/7. Unfortunately, the surgery was NOT A SUCCESS FOR ME. After many further tests and much further physical therapy, I am ALSO told that more surgery does not seem to be an option at this point. With severe arthritis and other problems in the joints both above and below the fusion, I have RELENTLESS PAIN in the form of neck aches, headaches and muscle spasms in my upper back and arms. As no one without this problem can really understand or appreciate, it never seems to abate. As a result, I live each day with extremely small windows of only partial relief afforded by schedule two and three pharmaceutical drugs. As you well know, these prescription drugs have dangerous side effects resulting in many deaths each day. To Quote Mr. Rosenberg, " an average of 78 deaths per day in the United States " on Good Morning America, November 18th, 2016.

About 3 years ago, I learned of Kratom. I was VERY skeptical at first, especially of botanicals, but found that the crushed leaf helped me tremendously in my fight against chronic pain in a very subtle, but incredibly effective way. I believe that this relative of the coffee plant is not an insidious hazard, but is absolutely the opposite, and many people's ANSWER to their increasing need for stronger and more dangerous pain relievers. I understand that little research has been done on Kratom, but based on its very mild effects, I believe this natural alternative to be much safer than hydrocodone and other pharmaceuticals. This mild plant is a natural gift to us that cannot be reproduced in pill form.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA's campaign that puts the plant on the same level as Heroin. All recent research presented this past year to the DEA shows that Kratom does NOT cause respiratory depression and this information SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED. I strongly urge you to reconsider FDA's viewpoint on Kratom and think about people in legitimate, unending pain who want another alternative to what has been killing so many Americans every day. My life depends on it.

I have been in Pain Management for almost 11 years now and have found Kratom has reduced my need to ask for more pain relievers. I believe my quality of life has been much improved by it. I truly hope that you all will consider keeping this much safer alternative available to those who are truly in need of it medically. I would be happy to discuss this topic and my experience with it at any time. We need to save others from the hard road of opiate addiction,

and this plant is the answer to the problem. Please dare to think differently, as many people's lives and well being rests in your hands.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Legality
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:20:16 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 37-year old male from (b) (6) .

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and your recent campaign. I believe this will be extremely detrimental to many people including myself.

I served in Iraq and I am now 70% service connected disabled. Part of my rating is for chronic back problems and pain that the VA has put me on opiates to treat. After several years of being on strong opiate pain killers I decided I wanted to live life without being attached to a pill bottle. I found Kratom during my search for anything that would help with the daily pain WITHOUT making me feel lethargic and tired all the time. I will admit that I still occasionally need to fill a prescription for a short acting pain medication, but I have totally stopped the time released morphine I was taking 3 times a day and I have significantly reduced the need for anything else. It truly disheartened me to learn that the FDA's war on opiate pain medications has spilled over to a plant related to the coffee plant. The fact that I will be forced back onto opiate pain medications seems really counter intuitive and I find it hard to believe I am the only one in this position. It makes me more upset to know people that may not have access to the medical care I do could end up purchasing illegal and dangerous drugs for the same reasons I will be forced to renew my opiate prescriptions. Please, don't force people like me back onto prescription pain medications or worse. I really don't think this will work at all like the you plan.

Kratom really is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs that has changed my life for the better. I fear this action by the you will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom and I hate to trade this simple plant for strong opiates.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>. They are very knowledgeable and represent people like me who just want to live a normal productive life.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM SAVED MY LIFE
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 11:04:41 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6).

I live in (b) (6), I'm 35 years old and a US NAVY veteran.

I was injured while training for high level helo jumps with search and rescue unit in (b) (6). But i continued my career in the military. Fought in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Where i sustained numerous other injuries. I am a combat veteran. I was discharged from service In 2005.

Since then I have suffered greatly from my injuries. I was diagnosed with PTSD. with servere anxiety and depression after 2 failed suicide attempts. I was also diagnosed with degenerative disease of my bone and spinal discs. As well as spinal stenosis of the entire spine and osteoporosis. I'm only 35. I was sent to pain management where I was given painful spinal injections. And medications that I had severe reactions to. Finally the doctors said well all you can do is take opioid pain killer medication. And per my doctor I did. Over the years I had to take more and more and more and one day the doctor said I'm cutting your medication in half because of the new laws. It forced me to buy pills on the street. It finally got so bad that I was at the point of finding heroin cause it's cheap and easy to find.

But thank Jesus I didn't I started researching how to get off pills and not live in pain. When I came across KRATOM.

I had no idea what it was. Every video I watched and testimony I read inspired me that there was hope out there with this wonderful natural plant that has no narcotics in it at all.

So I googled in my town where some was being sold. I spoke with the sales lady telling her what I was going through. And she gave me two packets for free. She came around the counter and hugged me and prayed with me. Reminding me that I'm worth so much more than pills and needles.

I took my first dose and 20 minutes later my pain in my back was gone! I felt better and had energy. I felt human again.

Since then I've continued to use kratom daily. I've stopped taking pills. I've stopped smoking. I'm no longer depressed. And I have a full time job I enjoy. KRATOM SAVED MY LIFE! Please stop the lies by the FDA, DEA and BIG PHARMA.

KRATOM IS THE ANSWER TO THE OPIOID CRISIS IN AMERICA.

BIG PHARMA IS SCARED AND WE NEED TO STOP THE ATTACKS ON KRATOM

FROM THEM.

THEY ARE LIARS.

KEEP KRATOM LEGAL

AND HELP MAKE

AMERICA GREAT AGAIN.

Thank you for reading,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Scheduling
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 12:03:25 PM

Hello ..my name is (b) (6), I'm a 41 year old from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom.

Now, my personal situation and the reason my mind is blown that I'm even having to type this letter. My wife suffers from chronic migraines, she's actually on disability for it. We've been married 14 years and spent 12 of those years desperately in search of relief, all over the country, impatient stays etc etc. This woman has been in agony and it has been very difficult to watch. Along the journey I've witnessed suicide attempts, pain killer addiction (which she had to go to rehab for, it was that bad), as well as manic breakdowns (which she was institutionalized for, it was that bad. Hell, basically. We have two daughters who for much of their lives, I had to play Daddy and Mommy as my wife was obviously not available the way we needed her to be. You get the jist.

Fast forward two years ago I was turned on to Kratom. Never ever expected any success because that is what we have become accustomed to. Well to our surprise it turned out to be incredibly effective, it was literally like winning the lottery that is how it felt, a very difficult feeling to articulate. So, she went on to get a job at Home Depot, which she's held for two years. The thought of working prior was non-existent. She'd either be zombie like from medicine or in excruciating pain. Now, her pain is manageable and you cannot even tell when she took Kratom, and she doesn't need it every day. The thought of knowing safe relief is there is half the battle of the migraines and the anxiety that comes along with it. The absolute most important part of these last two years is my daughters have an incredible Mom. Grades have gone up, social interaction has improved. Again stepping back and watching my family now gives me a feeling that is difficult to describe, I never thought we'd get there.

Now the FDA is trying to take this away from her and put us back to square one. The thought of going back there is terrible, I've even spared you a lot of what went on during our times of struggle. If there is anything you can do from your position to help our battle, obviously I'd be forever grateful. Thank you.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom scheduling
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 12:08:16 PM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I'm writing today regarding the potential scheduling of Kratom. I'm a military veteran and an almost middle aged mom of 5 with no criminal history. My time in the military exposed me to radiation from working in close proximity with nuclear submarines. 20 years ago at age 22 my entire thyroid had to be removed due to thyroid cancer. What followed was 18 years or so of pure hell where I gradually became weaker and weaker. I visited many Drs, tried many treatments. None helped. 5 years ago I found Kratom. It was little known back then, a blip i found on the internet somewhere. I spent another year researching it, absolutely terrified to take something that could be a "street drug" (I'd never touch heroin or spice or bath salts or anything that could be considered a dangerous street drug, I won't even take prescribed pain meds except for very severe situations such as surgery.) and having spent a significant amount of time and money trying other supplements, I didn't want to rush into purchasing and trying it until i was well educated about it.

Finally, I did try it and the result was purely amazing. At that point, I was nearly bed bound and had brain fog that was so terrible that I could barely think straight. I felt like an observer to my life rather than a participant. Kratom gave me clarity and energy and i was able to get out of bed and take care of my family. I was able to be a mother to my children for the first time in years.

Kratom does not make me "high" or in any way alter my consciousness. It's sort of like when you take that first few sips of coffee in the morning, ahhhh...i feel more awake and like i can tackle this day now. Kratom is in the same plant family as the coffee plant so that makes sense to me. It's what i take instead of Tylenol (acetaminophen sends thousands to the ER every year) for mild pain relief, instead of an energy drink (also sends thousands to the ER) to get my body moving, instead of Xanax to help during stressful times.

Kratom gave me the mental clarity and strength to take my health into my own hands and figure out how to overcome the symptoms resulting from my total thyroidectomy. I was better able to explain to my Dr what my symptoms where and was able to do research so that my Dr and i could work together. I'm not 100%, but I'm probably 80% now and getting better.

Kratom has given me my life back.

I think that as we all navigate this process (of whether to schedule kratom or not), it's important to make a few distinctions. There ARE those who peddle adulterated kratom and they must be stopped. There is no denying that this is an important issue. Those of us who take kratom to help regain health generally heavily research which vendor to buy our leaves from. We look at the lab tests which shows the purity and we only purchase from the vendors who test every single batch and who have had their packing facility inspected. As a mother, I simply cannot take the chance on taking contaminated kratom (contaminated by either other substances or bacteria). I would not take anything that would endanger my or my children's lives. Those who sell kratom out of unclean facilities and those who adulterate the ground kratom leaf powder with harmful substances absolutely must be stopped.

I'm in full favor of regulating kratom to some extent, in order to protect people from these issues. I'm simply asking that you don't take it away altogether because me and thousands like me will be forced back into dangerous medications, some will turn to harmful street drugs for relief, some may take their own lives, many will be relegated back to the pits of poor health and pain, unable to be competent and contributing members of society.

I appreciate your time and attention to this matter and pray that you will hear the voices of the many who depend on kratom to live healthy and productive lives.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Testimony
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 4:06:36 PM

My name is (b) (6), 40 yrs, from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my testimony of Kratom has done for me and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I began using Kratom 1 1/2 years ago after a lifelong friend told me about how much it had helped him.

For 12 years I have suffered with fibromyalgia, restless leg syndrome, arthritis, and depression. I was a young healthy mother before a routine surgery nearly took my life in 2005.

After the closing of the pain clinic I attended I was left to WD without any assistance. I struggled everyday just to get out of bed and even ended up losing my job due to all my health complications. Kratom has not only given me my life back, but also my son his mother, and my husband his wife. I am able to live and function better than ever before and without any horrible side effects.

Kratom has given me my life back and many others. I know several close personal friends and family members that safely use this product. With the threat of it being taken away I know many will resort back to their old ways and as for me I'm afraid that the life that I've enjoyed for the last 1 1/2 years will quickly fade and once again my son will lose the mother that he has seen thrive over the last 1 1/2 years.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 12:56:13 AM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 48-year old man from (b) (6) .

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started taking Kratom to help me get off of the synthetic opiate Tramadol. It saved my life. I was suicidal and experiencing extreme withdrawals from this prescription drug. A far worse thing EVER than Kratom itself. Kratom is a plant related to the coffee plant. It has similar effects as caffiene. I use it now for focus and for general overall well being and happiness.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit
<https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 9:24:09 AM

Please, STOP!!!!, trying to HURT the people who have found a BETTER way of Getting rid of their PAIN, With a SAFE alternative to DANGEROUS Prescription Meds, I have been using KRATOM, for a year, & have NOT had a bad reaction to it!!!!!! I'm Diabetic, have Heart issues, I'm on Met for in, Flowmax, Brilinta, Robaxin, have NOT had a bad nor any reaction between, these things!!! I was on Oxycodone, Oxycontin, Soma, for 17 years, without ANY relief from Major Pain, from 2 back operations, that left me with 6in of metal on each side of my spine, & 6 metal screws, KRATOM has been a GOD send!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I also have arthritis in my spine, bursitis in my hips, & I'm Begging YOU as a Fellow Human Being, PLEASE!!!!!!!!!! Let people take KRATOM, if it helps them!!!!!! Please look at the Science that is available, currently on KRATOM!!!! It is NOT a Dangerous Product!!!! Please have somebody send e-mail to me to tell me if You agree with me, after you have read letters, & looked at the Science!!! THANK YOU, for Reading This!!!!!!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 5:08:31 AM

Hi !kratom has been a life saver for us !! Please stop abuse human beings tnx!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 1:47:33 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

Thank You,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 6:21:49 AM

I am a 53 year old woman who over years from HARD WORK and genetics has developed a lot of problems in my back. I have had epidurals physical therapy and have been a many medications , to which because of MY GOVERNOR in (b) (6) I can no longer take .

FIRST of all I am a working class citizen and i should be able to take what I want in order to keep WORKING daily . NOT HAVE government tell me WHAT I can take.

I was told I would have to suffer through withdrawels from my meds and Dr told me oh well call governor. This is so unfair but yet all the non workers I know STILL get their meds ? Can someone please explain that to me

A co worker of mine gave me Kraytum to take after hearing my situation , I had no withdrawal systems at all and was able to get off my meds(to which I had no choice) in addition it took most of my pain away

I don't feel pain down my legs or back . Why would someone BAN THIS NOW?? it A JOKE REALLY .

This plant has helped me tremendously I can not continue work, without it will be forced to give up my job u feel pain leaving your body and feeling relieve.

You will always have people who abuse everything those are the ones who don't ADD to society , who suck working class and they still receive Meds and now ruining a PLANT tbthat at can help millions of WORKING CLASS AMERICANS.

WHY A ban a plant that helps !!!!! doesn't make sense to stop something THAT helps people live PAIN FREE .

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 8:04:36 AM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits." I know many people who have bennifeted from it, it's not a drug, it's a planet. It has helped people come off hard drugs.

Sent from my Sprint Samsung Galaxy S8+.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My experience
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 2:21:22 PM
Attachments: [My experience with Kratom.docx](#)

Dear Scott Gottlieb M.D.

If you could take the time to read my attached letter, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thank you , and have a excellent day.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

November 25, 2017

My name is (b) (6) . I am 26 years old and from (b) (6) .

My purpose for writing this letter is to inform and voice my support for Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA's recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin.

I suffer from ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. As well as BPD (Borderline Personality Disorder). I have trouble managing my thoughts and feelings, and get easily overwhelmed, which subsequently leads to anger and much frustration with everyday tasks as well as situations. These mental issues have cost me much frustration amongst many other things. I dropped out of College because of my frustrations with not being able to focus and having anxiety when having to interact and be social with other people. This has also kept me from being able to keep jobs.

As you probably assume, this has also led to loss of many friends, then, loneliness. I have a shoulder that dislocates frequently, and is very painful. I have had to go to the hospital many times to get it replaced.

Instead of using opiates and stimulants, I use Kratom. Kratom has shown to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. It has tremendously enhanced my quality of life for it has helped with my anxiety when having to be social. Kratom has helped me focus, and because of this I have re-enrolled at my local community college. I don't get as overwhelmed when having to manage my thoughts and feelings. Kratom has also helped me manage my pain in my shoulder. I even have a job now.

Because of this plant, Kratom. My quality of life has significantly gone up. My life is now manageable, and all without the use of harmful and dangerous opioids and stimulants. I am a responsible adult, and don't misuse this drug. I consume it responsibly, as well as millions of others do.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My kratom recovery story
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 10:57:39 PM

Fibromyalgia stole my life more than 20 years ago. I have severe chronic pain and fatigue that limits my activities of daily living. I have been prescribed more pharmaceuticals than I can remember and suffered damaging side effects from them. I've participated in psychotherapy, aqua therapy, multiple pain management programs, acupuncture and hypnosis. None of these modalities brought me relief and for quite some time I was bed fast and dependent on family for care. Unless you have experienced unrelenting severe pain 24 hours a day, you cannot know the horror of it. My doctors have prescribed me morphine, fentanyl, oxycodone, tramadol and other medications to control the pain. None of them worked for very long and I could see these prescriptions were going to lead to addiction. Often I weaned myself off them and suffered through terrible withdrawal because the small amount of relief they gave was not worth addiction or overdose death. Bottom line is these narcotics are not effective in treating chronic pain. There were times when I thought about taking my life because so just couldn't get a break from the pain. A friend introduced me to kratom. She had been consuming it for more than 7 years without side effects or becoming addicted to it. I started my own journey consuming kratom. I cannot tell you how it has improved my life. I am having PAIN FREE days and my energy level is greatly improved. Kratom has restored my life and I can enjoy all sorts of activities that make my life rich and full. Kratom does not make me high, nor do I experience side effects. I am now clear minded without the sedation caused by narcotics. I am devastated that the DEA is working to ban the ONLY thing that has helped me in the past 20 years. I implore you. The study they have done is full of inaccuracies and half truths. I fear that if Kratom is banned this country will see an epidemic of self inflicted deaths by people who have no hope. In addition, kratom will become a black market commodity and people will be buying product cut with God knows what just like the herion is being cut with deadly substances. Please HELP us Keep kratom legal. There are legitimate studies available many can be found on the American Kratom website.

Science and facts about kratom from The American Kratom Association at
www.amerikankratom.org/science
<https://www.amerikankratom.org>

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My Kratom story - Keep Kratom Legal and Access Available to all Responsible Citizens and Residents
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:35:16 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 62-year old man from (b) (6) and, in support of Kratom I will try to keep my email short.

I am supporting the legal use, and over-the-counter access, of Kratom for a variety of scientifically proven healthy reasons. Since I have been supporting Kratom I helped to support the scientific exploration of Kratom for truth about this "organic." As a result of the extensive research done I know it is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues that effect my life at my age.

I started the use of Kratom in search of a pain remedy that could replace aspirin, ibuprofen, and acetaminophen; all of which have devastating long term effects on the human body. Kratom works as well as these pain killers, without the long-term side effects.

I suffer from arthritic joint pain, and alcohol addiction. Both illnesses are controlled, or eliminated by my use of Kratom.

Kratom has saved me from alcoholism. This is even more important than use as a pain remedy. My father is a doctor and informed me that alcohol is also an opiate, in that it affects the opiate centers of the brain.

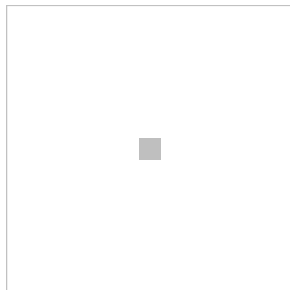
Please keep this plant legal, do not allow the DEA, DOJ or FDA to add it to the Federal Controlled Substances List. The science has been provide through the organization American Kratom Association to show that Kratom has a positive influence and is not responsible for deaths.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner.FDA
Subject: My Kratom tale..Thank=you for your consideration!!!
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 10 55:25 AM



KEEPING THE PRESSURE ON

Due to todays most recent concerns from our team in Washington DC, we are now being advised to start calling your FEDERAL legislators.... Congress and Senate....

Start calling, writing and emailing your federal legislators.

Contact Your Congressperson (see letter template)

Find yours here: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

Contact Your Senator (see letter template)

Find yours here: <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>

Use the letter template below. However, when writing

Some of the things to be doing as we are working on this ATTACK:

WRITE:

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002
CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

CALL THE FDA:

"I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science

My name is (b) (6) . I'm a 57-year old woman from (b) (6) .

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and painful physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Almost 3 years ago, I too, was on the opiate 'train'. It was all above board, and Dr prescribed. I suffer from severe spine pain due to Scoliosis since a that I've had since I was 13. My mom became dependent on me in 2014, and I needed to be clear headed and strong. The Dr prescribed opiates were NOT providing this. Plus, I was starting to need more and more to help. Going to a 'pain clinic, an hour away, took precious time away from my mom.. I found out about Kratom, and decided to try it.. It was amazing. In Feb of 2015, I stopped taking the Oxycodone. I was tired of the expensive visits to the "Pain Clinic" and the stigma of being an opiate user.. Withdrawal from 10 years of opiates is notoriously hard, but with Kratom's help? I did it... Kratom is also so important in pain control. I use it to this day for sciatica and scoliosis pain. It is not addictive, as I can go a month without using it.. The taste of Kratom is terrible, but is the only thing about it that I don't like. When I take it, within 15 minutes, the pain begins to subside. After a half an hour? It's gone. Even the Oxy didn't have such amazing results.

Because of Kratom, I was clear headed, and able to take care of my mom for the last few years of her life. I didn't have to send her away, and I had those last very precious years with her. I will always be so grateful of that.. If I had continued to use the Dr prescribed opiate? I have no doubt that I would not be here today, working with hospice patients and living a full life, full of gratitude..

Please. Please please do not ban Kratom. It is a wonderful alternative to opiates and there are so very many people who have gotten their lives back, due to this plant. I know that you, in your heart, want what is best for us, I HAVE to believe that.. Kratom is that. It is so much better than any opiate I've tried, it is non-addictive, affordable and as of now? fairly easy to get.. Because of its heinous taste, I just can't see people abusing it.. (The taste is bitter and texture is gritty).. Please, if you have any questions about Kratom, or how it works or the difference that it has made in MY life? Feel free to contact me at (b) (6) My name is (b) (6) My biggest fear, is that Kratom will be banned, and we will lose so many innocent lives. Live of people that are simply wanting to have some relief from pain... I was able to be completely present with my beautiful mom up until she died (b) (6) . I will always be so grateful of that.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely (b) (6) @yahoo.com

\

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My kratom testimony
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 12:07:03 PM

I am a 47 year old mother of 3.

My daughter and I were in a horrific car wreck in (b) (6). I sustained substantial trauma to my feet and ankles. I had to undergo 3 surgeries. Now I have a steel plate and 7 screws in the heel of my left foot and no cushion between where my ankle and leg bone meet, on my right foot. I have chronic pain, Restless Leg Syndrome, and arthritis in my hips now, because of the way I walk. After my orthopedic surgeon released me, I was then referred to a pain management doctor. On my first visit, the doctor prescribed my 120 hydrocodone, 90 morphine and 120 neurotonin a month. I did what the doctors told me and, after a year, the doctor decided that I needed to see a psychiatrist. They scheduled an appointment for me the following week and, after two visits with him, I was prescribed Xanax, Seroquel, and Paxil. Between these two doctors, I was taking 6 prescriptions. I couldn't function. I would lose days at a time. I could not do things with my daughter, and my memory was non-existent. I could not work. I was a walking zombie. I finally had had enough. I quit taking all 6 prescriptions, cold turkey, and the withdrawals were hell. I thought I was going to die, literally. I made it through the withdrawals, but my chronic pain and my diagnosed anxiety, PTSD, and depression were back in full force !!! Then a friend told me about Kratom. I did my research, and ordered a few samples. Kratom made my life better. Kratom helped me get my life back. I now enjoy refinishing furniture, which I sell. I feel better. The pain is still there, but I am a functioning member of society now. I am happy. I feel NORMAL again. (Like I did before the wreck). Most importantly, I get to enjoy my daughter again...and she's happy to have her mom back. We laugh together, we have "girls day out", go shopping, or, sometimes, we just sit out on the porch talking and playing with our dogs. My daughter told me the other day, "I am glad your back, Mama". I just cried and smiled and said "I am glad I am back too".

DO NOT take that away from me or my daughter !!! DEA, you have no idea how many lives you are going to destroy. I have no side effects from taking Kratom. It DOES NOT impair me in any way.

I have gone several days without taking kratom and I have no negative side effects from it. It's kinda like having a really good cup of coffee in the morning. It gives me a sense of well-being.

I am not going back to any doctors. I REFUSE !! You cannot ban something that has changed my life for the better and helped give me my family back. You will take away my freedom from something I have worked very hard to overcome, my chronic pain. I can continue to do this with Kratom. If you take Kratom away from my family and I, you might as well put me 6 feet under, because that is what it would be for me...a death sentence.

We, as Americans, have the right to make our own choices. That is what this country was built on. This is my body and my life !! I AM KRATOM !!!!

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7 edge, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My purpose of Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 2:08:55 AM

Look man I understand the fact that you guys are doing this because you're scared that it will make people start losing money in the drug department but please listen this through... I am a truck driver of 15 years with chronic back pain and I was never able to drive because of the restrictions on pain pills. I found kratom and have my pain relief and it does not effect driving please you may cause thousands of truck drivers to lose their jobs... please I beg of you!

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: MY SAFE ALTERNATIVE-Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 12:07:44 PM

Good morning!

My name is (b) (6), I am a 26 year old female from (b) (6).
I would like to voice my concerns about recent falsities told about a supplement I often use, Kratom.

Kratom has personally changed my life for the better since I had found it a few years ago. I suffer from chronic depression and anxiety/panic attacks, Kratom has helped me with these issues GREATLY for years now. Kratom does not impair me like other prescriptions I have taken, it does not seem to be taking any toll on my body or mind like other prescriptions I have used.

I personally know more than a handful of friends/relatives to pass away taking prescription drugs, taking away a safe, natural alternative makes no sense!
I know many people in my life to responsibly use Kratom and it has in no way taken over lives the way I have seen other pills or "drugs" do! Nothing but positive turn around and a happier day to day!
This is an ALL NATURAL supplement that responsible adults should have the choice to use.

I can't believe that there are so many, proven deadly, legal substances claiming lives all over our country and you want to ban this plant.

This could possibly be a huge help in the current opioid epidemic, if you truly care about people's quality of life, and life in general you will reconsider and look at the studies out there to deem this as a safe dietary supplement. Please keep money motives out of millions of people's lives, that is what I see here.

Thank you for your time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My Success Story in regards to Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 8:19:46 AM

Hi, My name is (b) (6) and I am writing today in regards to keeping Kratom legal.

I am a 37 year old wife and mother to three beautiful boys from a small town called (b) (6). I struggled my entire adult life with Opiates. I went to inpatient treatment 3x & each time I always relapsed. I was able to get clean, but I could never STAY clean.

My parents had died when I was just 17 & 21 and I struggled with addiction from that point on. My addiction had taken me to the pits of hell. I had gotten arrested in (b) (6) & I remarried & moved down here to (b) (6) from the (b) (6) area in (b) (6). I stayed clean for a year and relapsed in 2014. It was then that I had wrecked a car and slammed it into a tree. I was on life support for 2 days and had to have facial reconstructive surgery. The fractures to my face, severed the muscle to my eye, which led me to being blind and have a "lazy" left eye. I also had to have multiple metal plates throughout my face, which leads me to being in pain everyday and I have headaches quite often too.

For a year after my wreck, I had repeatedly spiraled out of control on opiates. It was to the point where I lost all of my family and my husband wanted a divorce. The lies and chaos of addiction had taken a huge toll on my marriage. He was done. Tired of the broken promises & broken heart I had given him.

Throughout the years, I had tried Suboxone to get clean as well to no avail. It was a horrible cycle and I always relapsed. I started doing some research for alternatives that could possibly help me this time. I was desperate to not only get clean, but stay clean. I wanted so badly to stay clean.

It was then, in 2015, I had come across Kratom and read all of the success stories with it. I figured I'd take a shot at kratom and try once again to get clean. I had ordered my first powder of kratom. I made some tea for myself each day & from THAT EXACT POINT, I have had NOT ONE relapse. In fact, the cravings I use to have all day long are now gone. My addiction is now just a dreadful memory.

I am now a stay at home mother of TWO small baby's & a 6 year old boy. I am finally the wife my husband had married and I am living everyday clean & sober without one single craving. I am a loving devoted wife to my husband as well. We own a small successful trucking company in which I am responsible for all of the paperwork. I have the most loving little family now & I owe it ALL to Kratom. I am now free from a 15+ year addiction to opiates. I never imagined my life would be as great and peaceful as it is now. The chaos, the lies, the secrets and all of the deception is now finally gone from my life. My family and I owe it ALL to Kratom.

Please take this plea into consideration in keeping Kratom legal. From the bottom of my heart, I am asking for it to remain legal for us. Not just for me, but also all of the chronic pain kratom community who also use it responsibly. I don't want to imagine what could happen if a ban was to be put in place on Kratom. Where would my life go? Would my cravings come back? Would I relapse immediately? Would my baby's lose their mom back to a life of

addiction and chaos? Where would it leave the chronic pain community?

Please keep kratom legal for all of us who use it responsibly.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @cox.net
To: Commissioner FDA
Cc: (b) (6) @cox.net
Subject: My support for the continued legal, unregulated use of kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 4:04:02 PM

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002

Commissioner Gottlieb:

My name (b) (6) . I'm a 69-year old male from (b) (6) .

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and its recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research that, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came to use kratom, learning about it from my wife, who's been an R.N. since 1963, who was on the faculty of (b) (6) in (b) (6) . She has a doctorate and is also an ordained minister. Neither of us is interested in taking any drug or substance for the recreational purpose of getting "high."

I suffer from short-term memory loss, perhaps an early onset of Alzheimer's and dementia. I saw doctors about this for two years with little or no change. I recently began using kratom, and it has helped me be more clear-headed and less likely to get frustrated and upset. I also sleep better and overall feel more relaxed and in control. My memory seems to have improved some. My wife feels encouraged and reports that I seem better.

I feel kratom is important and should be available, I feel kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits and has changed my life for the better.

I fear this action by the FDA against it will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society would not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

I also support the legalization of cannabis for medicinal use in all states where it remains illegal.

Thank you for your time and service to our country.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Opiate Epidemic
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 9:46:54 PM

I would like to voice my support of Kratom. I am worried recent stories put kratom in risk of being available. Kratom has SAVED MY LIFE! And so many people I know. I have heard that it killed 36 people over an untold amount of time. I also heard that 36 of those people were using other drugs. Either way, 36 is such a low number, looking at the numbers of other things, and the 1000's of people that die every month from opiates. Even Tylenol kills 200+ people every year. I have used this plant for years now along with 100's of people I know. Please help us keep our free to choice to this natural plant. Thank you for taking the time to read this!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please consider helping us and not hurting us! KRATOM SAVES LIVES
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 10:22:02 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 37-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I personally came to using kratom about 2 years go to help with chronic withdrawal and opioid addiction. My family and I have worked closely to manage every step of the way with the appropriate amounts to manage my previous addiction. My life has turned around way beyond anything I could have imagined and it is all because of a simple, non toxic, herbal remedy that I can afford! Since that terrible nightmare that is called " the opioid epidemic " We have bought a house, excelled in our careers and have had an overall high quality of life. We the people do not want to be stuck on horrible medications like suboxone and methadone. Please help us maintain this new and improved lifestyle by keeping kratom on the shelves. It is not even a tall order! Do you folks want to help us or hurt us?

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please dont ban Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:09:06 AM

Hello Mr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 35 year old from (b) (6),

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom has been the only thing that can help with my chronic back pain that's safe and NOT ADDICTING. In the past, I've had to use opioids, which would leave me unable to work or function. Kratom is the only thing I can use and keep working.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Cheers,

(b) (6)

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please hear our side
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 1:45:24 PM

Hi I am writing you today as a responsible concerned citizen, I am married with three children and I have been consuming the Botanical plant kratom for seven years now. Please sir, kratom has given me my life back I suffer from ptsd, anxiety and depression as well as chronic pain. Along with diet and exercise kratom has given me the ability to work and live a happy healthy productive life. This is not just my story but also others who share the same ailments. I have tried many different prescription medications that have not worked and have had unwanted side effects. With Kratom however I have had virtually no side effects whatsoever it has been all positive and I fear that if this plant is taken out of my life I will go back to being a guinea pig for different drugs or back down the dark road that some medications can take a person. I fear that the recent FDA false information and smear campaign Would put kratom on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin and other opiates. Scheduling this plant would also prevent further research which to date has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression which is the main cause of death from opiates. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with so many important benefits and has change my life completely for the better. I fear this action by the FDA will not only lead me down a dark road but will lead to more deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic that is sweeping the nation. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society would not be the same without a kratom. Please sir if you have any questions about Kratom please visit [Botanical Education Alliance.com](#) as well as [americankratom.org](#). Thank you for your time and service. Sincerely (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please help
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 8:54:59 PM

Good evening,

I am writing to request that kratom not be banned. I am 33 years old and I have suffered from chronic pain and fatigue for the last 6 years of my life. My rheumatologist put me on a Fentanyl patch and gave me pain pills for break through pain. I hated these medications but it was the only way I could still function enough to continue working my full time position. I forgot to mention that I am a single mother of two boys. I was on that fentanyl for 6 years. I one day woke up and decided I no longer wanted to be on the patch. I stopped the patch and have been off of it almost 7 weeks. It was a horrible process.

I have two herniated disc's in my back as well as Fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, degenerative disc disease, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, chronic fatigue syndrome, RLS anemia, hyperparathyroid and migraines just to name a few

I have been successfully off of that patch for 7 weeks but I still have horrible pain. I tried Kratom doubting it would help with any of the pain. 30 mins later I had a significantly less amount of pain and a noticeable amount of more energy. Its not a whole lot but I can at least get out of bed. My children noticed it helped me. This plant has helped me not go back on the Fentanyl patch.

I can only imagine the amount of people that it would drastically harm and destroy their quality of life. If kratom would be made illegal. I truly believe that if kratom would be banned it would only force people to start using opiates and illegal drugs. Which is what I thought this whole opiate epidemic is supposed to be fighting against. I also very strongly believe the suicide rate will skyrocket. I'm sure it greatly increased already. The way people will be forced to live is not living anyway.

Nobody can understand how one feels having to live their life in agonizing pain from the minuit they wake up until the minuit they lay down to TRY to sleep. Nobody can understand how heartbreaking it is wanting to go with your children to the park but having to keep putting off going to the park with your children over and over. Because you hurt so bad you can hardly move. Nobody can understand working for 13 years in the same school and absolutely loving your position but having to resign after 13 years because you are too sick. Nobody, unless you are going through it or had to experience it.

So, I ask you please do not take the plant that aids in helping me be able to live a little bit better than I was. Please don't do that to my children. They are great, honor roll students who deserve so much better. Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please stop the ban on kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 4:00:07 PM

Kratom has saved my life i used to smoke weed and because of it the doctor took me off all my pschy meds. I am bipolar and have severe anxiety and ptsd im a wreck with out meds until i met kratom. Now i quit marijuana and am more stable than ever before the nightmares stopped the shaking stopped the vomiting stopped everything i owe my life to this plant! I used to wet thebed due to severe nightmares from ptsd but the day I started kratom that stopped. I can go one and on but all i can say is please dont ban this plant i can finally function

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please stop this ban on Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:09:32 PM

Dear Sir,

Let me start out by saying I'm a very busy woman. I'm a mother of 2 amazing children, a business owner, church goer, gym goer, and have a second part time job in the service industry. Kratom gives me a healthy happy life style. I'm wondering why with the facts and statistics out there Alcohol/pharmaceutical drugs/over the counter medications kills hundreds of thousands of people each year. Why would you ban Kratom which from what you say killed 39? Of those 39 there has been 1 unconfirmed death. Out of the 39 pharmaceuticals and again over the counter medications were attributed to their deaths... These numbers are astronomically let me repeat astronomically less then the deaths that are attributed to pills medications and pharmaceuticals that are coming out each month for every type of ailment depression and things out there in the world that people can develop!! Kratom is in the class of wild lettuce Tumerick and Moringa which are all legal!! If you ban this organic plant there will be so much blood on your hands. People will have to resort to medications that they have broken away from for years!! And we all know what can happen if they take one pill to many or any extenuating circumstances that could happen. Is this something that really makes sense??? I'm sure something other then a ban can be done!! Please take the time and find the correct route to go through about dealing with this matter, not a ban.

Thank you for your time.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: pls read
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 4:29:34 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 48-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: recent developments
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 10:27:31 AM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 54-year old woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I use kratom to help with pain from my scoliosis which has gotten worse with age, I was using Advil for pain but it was causing ulcers and was about to start to using opiates. so kratom has helped me be able to stop using that and now I can spend more time doing what I love like camping and hiking with my family.

I feel Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I have been using it for 2 years without any side effects. I fear this action by the FDA will impair my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions please feel free to contact me at this email or phone at (b) (6)

Respectively

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:58:34 AM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

Thanks for your service to our nation. I believe you have an important, tough job.

I'm writing today to express my concern that kratom may soon become illegal. I'm a responsible husband and father who works full time and pays taxes. I've been taking kratom a few times a week for about five years. For me, it's a great way to relax after work instead of having a few beers. I'd hate to lose this right. I hope you will consider any alternative to prohibition.

Best wishes for a happy new year, sir.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 11:56:50 PM

To whom it may concern -

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 32 year old adult male from the (b) (6) area of (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign to portray Kratom as dangerous. Kratom is a plant that helps millions of people, myself included, who suffer from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions. It is also extremely beneficial in helping people overcome addiction to opiate pain killers. At this time when the nation faces an epidemic level of opiate abuse and overdose - attempting to place Kratom in the same category is extremely dangerous.

I discovered Kratom several years ago after a particularly rough period of time in my life. I was diagnosed with bipolar depression, and was taking several powerful, dangerous, and addictive antipsychotic medications as well as prozac. Research led me to become incredibly uncomfortable with the ever increasing level of medications I was being prescribed with no relief to any of my symptoms. After I read about Kratom, I decided to try it for myself. I have since been free of any prescription medication and use kratom daily. I am a responsible adult - I have all my bills paid on time, I have worked since I was 16, I am college educated. This is a decision I have made for myself in terms of a wonderfully effective treatment. It has reduced my anxiety and contributes to my lessened depression.

Kratom has truly given me my life back. It is a completely natural, effective treatment. I don't know what I would do without it. In comparison to other options - prescription medications - that have lists of side effects and cause thousands of overdose deaths each year - Kratom is safe. And I think everyone should be allowed to legally explore all their options when it comes to treating chronic and acute conditions from pain to depression to anxiety, etc. Additionally - with it's benefits in aiding opiate withdrawal it is crucial that it remain legal and available to people who need it. Banning it or scheduling it will only cause more harm. I fear that this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic.

Thank you for your time -

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: regulating kratom
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 2:38:00 PM

My name is (b) (6) . I'm 70 years old and live in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. Kratom is helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions. It is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. Labeling kratom as a Class I narcotic would prevent further research which, to date, has shown it to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I've been living with chronic pain (from peripheral neuropathy) for 17 years, and have been taking methadone (120 mg daily) for the past 15 years. My physician is now being forced by his practice (b) (6)) to cut back on my methadone prescription -- from 120 mg to zero! He told me the practice is attempting to "get rid" of all its chronic pain patients.

I knew when I began taking methadone for pain control that it would be for the remainder of my life. Well, so is PN pain. Now, our state legislature is coming down hard on recreational drug users, and of course that also affects chronic pain patients. I have never urine-tested positive for illegal drugs, and am baffled as to why (b) (6) and our government has taken this punitive path with all their pain patients.

I recently began using kratom and am very pleased with the results. My pain has gone from disabling to manageable. I have not experienced any negative side-effects, and expect to soon be able to reclaim at least part of my life.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, many of whom may never have used illegal drugs. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6) [@gmail.com](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Responsible Oversight of Mitragyna speciosa
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 1:46:24 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I am writing to express my concern about recent commentary by the FDA and DEA about Mitragyna speciosa, commonly known as Kratom. As an individual who has benefited from occasional use of this plant, I would like to offer my testimonial in support of continued public access and research.

I have a degree in molecular biology and am a small business owner, law abiding citizen, and productive member of society. I have found benefit from occasional use Mitragyna speciosa to help elevate mood, reduce anxiety, and relieve pain. Many years ago I had issues with prescription opiates, and I have not experienced any issues with dependency or abuse with this plant.

There are a multitude of legal prescription and OTC drugs that have a great deal more health risk associated with them than Mitragyna speciosa. While scientific research has been fairly limited, the potential benefits are well documented in overwhelmingly positive (though anecdotal) evidence. I feel strongly that it would be a huge mistake to ban an herb with such promising potential to help treat pain, anxiety, mood issues, and substance abuse issues. This is clearly not a substance in the same category as schedule 1 narcotics like heroin and cocaine.

I urge you to reconsider the FDA's stance on Mitragyna speciosa, and to refrain from making reactionary and impulsive decisions regarding it's legal status. Additional research and common sense regulation would be a far more prudent approach, in the best interest of public health.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Save Kratom
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 3:44:29 PM

11.27.17

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 44-year old wife and mother from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I found Kratom from a facebook group for chronic pain patients. A member was discussing how they had used Kratom to help wean off opiate medications and had been able to use ONLY Kratom for pain relief, well-being and mood. I decided to do some research as I had been in pain management for over 10 years and was fearful of my medications being cut and wanting to find a better way to manage my pain. After a few months of research, I decided to try Kratom. Within a week I was able to substitute the Kratom for my pain pills and completely weaned myself off. The Kratom helps my pain better than any of my pain pills ever did. I didn't feel sluggish, dumbed down or like I was addicted and HAD to have the Kratom. I had no withdrawals off the pain medication either by using Kratom. Kratom has given me MYSELF back again, my family and my life.

I have had RA since I was 24, fibro since my 30's and DDD in my L4 and L5 region for last 6 years. I was on long acting narcotic pain pills, short acting pain pills, Neurontin and Lyrica. I have successfully been off all of these medications since April 2017 and feel better than ever. I am active again, not laying on a couch and not figuring out what I can do or not do in a day based on what medication I have. Kratom saved my life.

Kratom has given me my life back, and my children their parent back. My wife has her spouse again and we are all experiencing a life we never thought I could have again. Kratom should be available to all who want to try it or use it. It saves lives. It's a plant and not a chemical being put into our bodies. We should have a say.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Stop the ban on kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 3:31:21 PM

Hi my name is (b) (6) 24, from (b) (6) in Canada (b) (6) I utilize kratom for many reasons and health issues, i suffer depression, anxiety, back pain and fatigue, I'm a single mother of a two year old with kratom it helps me be a better mom, interact with her, give her the childhood I never had, without kratom I'd be in a methadone clinic. I just got off methadone and experienced pure hell withdrawals for 3 months and being a single mother I could NOT sit in bed crying in pain and wds I had to take charge and that's when I researched kratom and went ahead and purchased it. Right then and there I knew this plant would be amazing, I was able to get out of bed take care of my baby at the time, do normal things. I'm now a healthy weight, I'm doing better now then I ever did I am 1 year clean from methadone, I will fight this fight with many who utilize kratom like me, I AM KRATOM
Please thinking about what you all would be doing to millions of people.
Thank you for reading this far.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: The negative FDA campaign against Kratom
Date: Saturday, November 25, 2017 8:14:19 PM

Commissisoner Scott Gottlieb MD,

My name is (b) (6) . I am a 47 year old mother of a 22 year old son that has been using Kratom to manage living with severe Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and a 28 year old daughter that used Kratom while managing nausea and pain for treatment of cervical cancer. Kratom has been very important for our family. It has changed the lives of two of the most important people in my life.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and disagree with the FDA and their recent negative campaign against Kratom. Kratom is a natural plant that has helped millions of people that suffer from acute and chronic mental and physical conditions and also has safely help ease the nations opiate epidemic problem naturally .

(b) (6) our son has had IBS for 10 plus years and has tried many different diets and pharmaceutical drugs to help with his IBS. (b) (6) tried Kratom about a year and half ago and it has been the only treatment that has helped him manage his IBS. This amazing plant has allowed him to follow his dreams .He is a senior in college and has applied to dental school.

(b) (6) our daughter, mother of 4 and 8 year old boys, used Kratom while fighting nausea and pain from treatment of cervical cancer. Our daughter was introduced Kratom as an alternative treatment from her primary care doctor.

Without this natural alternative our family would of suffered greatly. Please read the 8-Factor Analysis by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., vice president of Research, Health Policy, and Abuse Liability PinneyAssociates located at [http ://www.americkratom.org/](http://www.americkratom.org/) click on the website and read articles under science and facts. It will help to clear up some of the myths you have heard about Kratom.

In conclusion Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed many lives including my son's and daughter's. Also, I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my family lives will not be the same without Kratom.

Thank you for your time and service.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: URGENT Message From A Concerned Citizen
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 6:15:48 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 39 year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support in favor of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign against this plant.

This campaign puts Kratom, a plant which has helped me personally remove myself from being a drug addict and a highly depressed person, in a bad light for people who don't know, nor have had any personal experience with this plant and would also put it on the same level as highly toxic and extremely addictive chemical as heroin.

Currently I am an assistant Pastor at my local church, I am a business owner and work from home with my wife and two kids (boys, (b) (6) who are 5 and 8). My life is great now, but it didn't used to be.

15 years ago I remember lying in a gutter in (b) (6) after an all-night heroin banger, forgetting where I left my car and immediately wondering what I was going to do for my next fix. I was highly addicted.

Finally, my sister shared Kratom with me and it turned my life around. Sir/Ma'am, I don't know where I would be right now without this plant. It saved my life.

I currently use it as treatment for depression and back pain. I used to work in the coal mine and blew 3 discs out of my back while there. I am pain free today and working as a law-abiding citizen should.

I wouldn't have been able to accomplish any of this without Kratom and it saddens me that the FDA would try to ban this plant and allow Dr's to prescribe other harmful substances to us. Please allow me the freedom to continue using Kratom in the comfort of my home. Please allow me to stay pain free and be the Dad and husband that my family knows and loves.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs and it has literally changed my life. If the FDA gets their way and is allowed to ban this plant called Kratom, I fear the addiction rate will skyrocket, not to mention the death rate of the opiate epidemic our country faces.

I am a productive member of society now and my life will not be the same without Kratom. Please visit every avenue of research before you take this away from law abiding citizens who are using it for health reasons. I would appreciate an open mind from your team and approach this - not as a witch hunt, but as a way to lower opiate addiction and alternative pain medicine in this country.

Thank you very much for reading my letter. If you have any questions, please visit <http://americankratom.org>

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Law-abiding Kratom user

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me grandiose and grateful. You will read all of me more than 20 times that is inescapable.
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 9:36:33 PM

Kratom is extremely safe and helps millions of responsible adult kratom consumers help manage their health and well-being. Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD did A 8 factor scientific study on kratom and the Botanical Educational Alliance's did an 8 factor scientific study on kratom and their both prove kratom is super safe with sound science. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "kratom has A remarkable record of safety and low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is one of the world's best experts on addiction and abuse liability. He is extremely qualified to believe kratom is remarkably safe. The science I just mentioned proves kratom is exceptionally safe with sound science. my advanced responsible adult kratom consumer perspective that kratom is remarkably safe proven by the sound science I just mentioned. The difference between everything you have read so far and the FDA public health advisory is extremely concerning to me. The FDA public health advisory on kratom contains many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements that don't meet the standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for Information they disseminate to the public, and therefore should be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You Love me the greatest reading me is inevitable and inescapable
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 9:55:18 PM

Disclaimer: Kratom isn't intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. I consume Kratom to help manage my health and well-being. I truly believe Kratom is A gift from God. Revelation 22:2 Holy Bible "On each side of the river stood A tree of life. The leaves of the tree are for healing" I truly believe Kratom is the tree of life spoken of in the Holy Bible I truly believe kratom is very safe and extremely beneficial. I used kratom for about A half decade, I believe I am A responsible adult advanced kratom consumer, and I truly believe it is extremely safe and helpful. I believe kratom is safer than NSAIDs. A lot more people die from NSAIDs than people die from kratom. tens of thousands more people die annually from NSAIDs than kratom. I am extremely convinced kratom is very safe as safe as safe as St. John Wort, hops, chamomile. That was of the conclusions of Dr. Jack Henningfield's 8 factor scientific study on kratom, and is backed up by his sound science. That kratom has no greater potential for substance use disorder than hops, St. John Wort, hops, guarana, and chamomile. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD also concluded that kratom is safe for human consumption and should remain A dietary supplement. Jack Henningfield PhD once said kratom has A remarkable record of safety and low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans." Be mindful that Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD did an 8 factor scientific study that proves kratom is safe with sound science.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You me most Grandiose reading all of me is inescapable
Date: Sunday, November 26, 2017 11:00:12 PM

I am A responsible adult advanced kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade with godly success to help manage my health and well-being. I truly believe it is very safe and that I would only get worse with my health if my kratom was prohibited without any perks or pros. Kratom is A gift from god. Revelation 22:2 Holy Bible "On each side of the river stood the tree of life. The leaves of the tree are for healing" I believe kratom is that sacred tree in the Holy Bible" Dr. Henningfield PhD once said, "Kratom has A remarkable history of safety of low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans." He also has A very positive scientific study that concludes kratom is very safe and fit for human consummation. I am A grown responsible adult advanced consumer of kratom and I want to make my decision about what I can put in my body that is extremely important to me. I truly believe kratom is God's gift and improved the quality of my life. I truly believe it's very safe backed up by sound science such as the Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD 8 factor scientific study on kratom. I truly believe the FDA should treats Americans as responsible adults that can make their own decisions on kratom dietary supplements they can take to help manage their health and well-being. This is super important to me because I know disabled American veterans that have combat related disabilities, and some of them lost arms and legs and live with chronic pain. I also know people with cancer that live with bad chemotherapy sickness and pain. I also know those veterans and people that live with cancer use kratom and they tell me kratom is A miracle plant that helps them better than any other dietary supplement on the market. I truly believe kratom is improving the quality of life of millions of responsible adult kratom consumers and I truly believe it is safe. Trust me taking away kratom away from someone that suffers from cancer chemotherapy sickness and pain isn't good dietary supplement policy. It will only make him or her feel sicker and the pain would be worse. Responsible adult kratom consumers deserve to be able to make their own choice about kratom consummation because we are responsible adults that deserve that freedom and because we have sound science to back up the truth that kratom is very safe. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD did an 8 factor scientific study and the Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study. Both came to the conclusion that kratom is very safe. I truly believe this more powerfully than anything else in my life ever. I have faith in God that you will regulate kratom to make it safer and and keep it legal, unscheduled, and accessible. I truly believe you will do this because deep down in the heart of God I believe it's the perfect FDA kratom policy. I have faith that comes with certainty.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You'll read me like 10 times because You love me extremely Grandiose
Date: Monday, November 27, 2017 7:21:15 PM

Disclaimer: kratom isn't intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. I believe the FDA public health advisory about kratom has many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated claims about kratom and don't meet the standards of quality required by the P. L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore should be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately. Please use the kratom positive science such as Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD 8 factor scientific study and the Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study as well as successful testimonials from responsible kratom consumer adults that truly believe that kratom has improved the quality of our lives. From Americans with fibromyalgia, lime disease, arthritis, cancer, and disabled veterans. There are millions of responsible adult kratom consumers in America and we believe kratom has improved the quality of our lives and we deserve to consume whichever dietary supplements such as kratom can be consumed to help manage the users health and well-being. Please factor those things I just mentioned into the reviewed and corrected FDA public health advisory. Responsible adult kratom consumers deserve to make our own choice about kratom consummation because we have sound science that proves kratom is safe. The Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study of kratom and the Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD 8 factor scientific study on kratom proves that truthfully.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Advocacy
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:53:51 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

Hello, my name is (b) (6). I am a 2nd-year medical student, and I'm contacting you as an educated advocate of the millions of *Mitragyna speciosa* users in the US.

I want to first share a personal story about *M. speciosa*. A close friend of mine has struggled with intractable depression for much of her life. No prescribed antidepressants have caused any lasting improvement for her, but she discovered kratom 2 years ago and has become an entirely new person. Her mood is noticeably better, and she has greatly increased her productivity. I am concerned for her mental health should she lose access *M. speciosa*.

Having a strong background in science, I was initially wary of what my friend was consuming. I've read a fair amount of the available literature on kratom, and it seems we have yet to characterize it well. We know that the most prominent alkaloid (i.e. mitragynine) has weak actions on the mu opioid receptor. However, this is but a fraction of kratom's mechanism, and much of how it works has yet to be elucidated. There is a significant stimulatory component to kratom, which may explain why it **does not cause respiratory depression**. With many opioid addicts reportedly using kratom to wean off opioids, kratom appears to be reducing the population of people at risk of opioid overdose. By my understanding, it appears that *M. speciosa* leaf (barring extracts and the like) is fairly weak and does not produce the mind-altering effects of other criminalized drugs in the US.

I'm writing in hopes that you will seriously consider the numerous anecdotal reports concerning this plant. It's been in use for millenia, and no physically attainable use of the plant appears to carry the risk of death. There are already multiple drugs legally sold throughout the US that are not only addictive but also pose major public health risks. If tobacco and alcohol can be legally sold in America, then certainly it stands to reason that kratom should be too.

This is not to say that kratom doesn't require better regulation in the US; it does. **It should not be available to minors**, and the contents of the product should be monitored as with other products. However, the responsible adults who use and benefit from the plant should not be labeled criminals and have to fear their government. Many kratom users are functional adults who have found a resource that improves their lives. I hope you will hear their voices and try to open a dialogue with these people.

Thanks for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: concerning kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:11:36 PM

Letter Template*

*It's important not to copy and paste, please use your own words

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is _____, I'm a ___-year old _____ from _____
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-How you came to use kratom..... (did you learn about it in a chronic pain support group, etc?)

-What ailments you suffer, what treatments haven't worked (prescriptions, surgery, etc.), how long you've been dealing with your condition, how long you've been using kratom and how many/what medications you've been able to quit.

-What kratom means to you (has it given you your life back, have you gone back to work, can you play with your, exercise or travel, etc., something anecdotal about why kratom is important and should be available).

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit

<https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

--- Include your name, address and phone number.

Please be professional and polite, keeping it as short as possible.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Dear Commissioner
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:38:09 PM

Dear Scott Gottlieb M.D.,

My name is (b) (6) I am a 26 year old from (b) (6)
I am voicing my support of Kratom. Like Yerba mate, Kratom has been a safe alternative for me and my mental health.

"An analysis of 70 trials of the most common antidepressants - involving more than 18,000 people - found they doubled the risk of suicide and aggressive behaviour in under 18s."

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2016/03/14/antidepressants-can-raise-the-risk-of-suicide-biggest-ever-revie/>)

Kratom is an alternative to depression and ptsd prescribed drugs, do you really want a spike in teen and veteran suicides?? If you make safer alternatives illegal, you will see that increase and you will see an increase in heroin addiction, period.. I hope you consider making nicotine a scheduled 1 because that drug took my grandma and already has a far higher death toll than Kratom ever could in 100 years.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>.

Thank you Mr Gottlieb, I hope you hear this cry for support.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Family physician in support of kratom's legality
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 11:51:07 AM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb:

I am a practicing family physician who is advocating for the continued legality of kratom. I have seen firsthand the positive effects kratom has had on the health and quality of life of patients. Like anything we take into our bodies, kratom carries risk, and is certainly not for everyone. However, recommending a ban on kratom will make it far more difficult to conduct the research necessary for determining its risks and benefits.

I am aware that America's opioid addiction crisis is one of the main issues President Trump's administration selected you to tackle. Having been on the front lines of this crisis, I laud your efforts I support you in this goal. Having examined what evidence there is, including my own patients' outcomes, I deem kratom's continued availability to the public much more a part of the solution, than a part of the problem. I am confident that as a fellow scientist and physician, you and your colleagues will take due consideration of all available unbiased, up to date scientific evidence regarding kratom, before making any recommendations to the DEA and any other government bodies.

Below is my contact information, as I would be happy to discuss this issue further with you and your colleagues. Consider this an open letter to the FDA; I consent to my name and my stance on this issue being shared, and this e-mail forwarded (in full and unaltered) as you see fit.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:06:09 PM

I wanted to take the time to share my personal experience with kratom. I am diagnosed with fibromyalgia since 2015. I was in a very horrible state one year ago. Fibromyalgia was ruining my life. I was bedridden with debilitating pain most days, hardly slept at night. I had to stop driving because the brain fog was so bad. And I had really bad depression, anxiety and anger issues. Nothing else I tried worked for me. Prescription medications are not an option for me.

I first heard about kratom in fibromyalgia groups. I did lots of research on it and read through many, many first hand accounts. During a week of really horrible flaring and pain, I ordered some kratom from a reputable vender recommended to me. This vender was already compliant to all the FDA suggested guidelines on supplements, which is something that is extremely important to me.

I started on kratom in Feb 2017 and it has turned me completely around and given me my life back. Kratom supports me with almost all of the problems that fibromyalgia causes. It supports my muscular health, I saw a huge improvement in my mental health, and it supports my sleep. I have been impressed with it.

In NO way does it cure me. When the dose wears off, my Fibromyalgia issues come right back. But it does allow me to at least get through the day and have some quality of life. I am able to walk the zoo with my kids and play with them again!

I have never experienced any side effects that would make me seek medical attention and nothing that has ever led me to think it's dangerous.

I do not find it at all addicting. I don't feel any physical or mental 'need' for it. If I can get through the day without it, I don't even take it. I had to quit kratom cold turkey for two weeks for an unrelated surgery, and felt NO physical or mental symptoms of withdrawal. All that happened was the return of my fibro issues of course.

I fear that future actions by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic and lead suicide rates of chronic pain patients to skyrocket. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. I will not be functional because of my Fibromyalgia.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6)

Here is a link to the 8-factor Analysis about the Kratom leaf.

<http://216.30.191.148/HL-AKA-Eight Factor and Recommendations by PinneyAssoc.pdf>

The Joy of the Lord is my strength.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:46:00 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and support my well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

(b) (6)

The Joy of the Lord is my strength.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Fwd: Kratom information : Kratom does indeed kill. My son, (b) (6), 34 yrs. old, Acute Mitragynine Intoxication, (b) (6)
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 6:16:56 PM

Dear Dr. Scott Gottlieb:

Thank you for your work on trying to limit the use of Kratom. I am here to testify it does indeed kill....

My good friend, (b) (6) (a Physician Assistant in (b) (6)) forwarded me and my dear son, (b) (6) (a director at (b) (6)) an article from USA Today. It stated the work you were doing to limit this "herb". All three of us sat at the (b) (6) to watch as (b) (6) left this world so early in his life, and so unnecessary.

We hope you have the stamina to get this particular deadly "herb" off the market. It sounds like there are many signatures suggesting otherwise, but I am sure there will be countless lives thanking you. The users have little knowledge of what this drug is capable of. Some will profit, more will die.

God's speed my friend.....

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6)
Date: November 14, 2017 at 5:42:25 PM EST
To: 5onyourside@ksdk.com
Subject: Kratom information

Dear 5 on Your Side:

A friend of mine forwarded me your video included in an article from USA Today. This is my 34 year old son, (b) (6). He passed away (b) (6). Kratom overdose. "Acute Mitragynine Intoxication". He was off opioids for 2-years, and using this OTC as an aid. It does kill. The photographer in the video is playing with fire, thinking it is fine.

Sincerely

(b) (6)



Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I am 37yr old Mom and Wife and once had no hope. Scott I hope you watch!
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:43:47 PM

Hi Scott,

I am a mom and wife from (b) (6) I really hope you see the truth about what kratom is. I believe you have the power to do extraordinary things with this herb. I would love to be involved or help if needed. Please take a look at my testimonial.

You have all the power here to save so many lives.

With love,

(b) (6)

Below is my link on YouTube

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I support Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:48:33 PM

Dear FDA,

I am a 39 year professional mom and wife that has NEVER has an opiate addiction. After doing months of research I decided to give Kartom a try for chronic pain from a chrainal fusion done several years ago. I hate taking pain pills, so instead I would suffer. My life, my family and my job were all affected from the pain. Since finding Kratom my life has changed 100% for the better.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

This plant is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:49:22 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Krantom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:09:52 PM

I (b) (6) am a Veteran. Since using the VA for health service connected disabilities. I have been given medication after medication after medication . With no. I do not take Narcotics nor is it my choice. What I needed was relief from the degree of pain I was on. I use Krantom on a daily basis in small amounts for my better well being and it works. While I share concerns as sold in head shops I do not prefer. The farmer that grows mine is committed to growing and testing the plant to insure quality and pureness of each plant that is sold. I believe FDA really needs to consider the stories of those it has helped. Safe drugs that have been approved by FDA for our betterment. Black Label meds are all over the place and people. And are infecting our body's minds and spirits. It is time to use a natural plant for better welling.

(b) (6)
Veteran

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 16, 2017 10:15:22 PM

Attention Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6). I just signed the We The People petition to keep Kratom legal. I am a 68 year old widow fighting to continue my independent life style. I have a lot of work to do to keep up my home I shared with my hubby until he passed away from cancer last year. I can not afford to not have the use of my hands and it was coming down to that when a new friend noticed the difficulty I was having and told me about Kratom. I have been using Kratom for about one year with no side effects other then the pain relief from my Osteoarthritis. The pain medications the doctor prescribed for me do not touch the intense pain that was bringing me to tears on a daily basis. And they are so addicting.

Kratom has given me my life back. Not only in being able to keep up my house and yard alone but to be able to do my art again. One thing that gives me great joy.

Kratom has been helpful to many of my friends all responsible adults reading the facts for themselves and making their decisions on weather to try it or not for their fibromyalgia, back injuries and arthritis pain. Taking Kratom away from me now would be heartbreaking to me and so many others. Sending me back to honestly stronger drugs that do cause me harm and do not take away the pain.

Please Keep Kratom legal.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:45:52 PM

Good afternoon. My name is (b) (6). I have been using Kratom now for three years as part of my daily maintenance because of severe digestive issues that the Borland-Groover clinic here in (b) (6) could not identify nor treat. I am a single parent with two young daughters and this wonderful plant allows me to be an active father and provide for them both on all levels. Please do not destroy all I have worked hard for. God has blessed us with all we need. May He bless your family as well. Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:46:36 PM

Hi, I am a 42 year old female from (b) (6) My husband I are both recovered addicts with 10 years clean and sober under our belts. I was diagnosed with lupus, fibromyalgia and Sjögren's syndrome in 2010 and was never able to use opiates because I did not want to become addicted again. I struggled with mainstream medications that they use to treat these ailments, as the side effects were worse than the disease for me. In 2013 I heard of kratom in a chronic pain group. I was near suicidal at the time and was willing to try anything at that point. I didn't have high hopes, but I ordered a little to try. When I finally did try it, I was amazed at how I was able to get up and do some dishes and vacuum without hurting. I didn't feel high, or tired. I felt great. Almost like my normal before I was Dx with lupus. I just felt human again. I was suddenly able to get on the floor and play with my twin toddlers. I was able to cook dinner without collapsing in exhaustion and pain afterward. I have been using kratom since. I am able to take days off without any issues or withdrawals, contrary to media reports, I've never felt "high" with it

I told my husband he needed to try it for his back pain. He has a twisted spine and many compressed discs. He's a mechanic and it's extremely taxing on his back. He's able to work while using kratom because it doesn't impair his brain. I implore the FDA to please look at scientific evidence of kratom and not go by media reports. This is not about money, it's about saving people from lifelong addictions to pain medications and giving chronic illness patients their life back.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
A Mom from (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 5:18:10 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 34 year old male from (b) (6) and I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I learned about kratom two and half years ago from my therapist. At the time I was battling a crippling alcohol and opiate addiction. He told me of a natural plant that could possibly help me with my situation. I spent some time researching kratom, and everything I read gave me hope. As I sit here writing this I have been sober for two years. With the support of my family, 12 step groups and the help from kratom I have found a new lease on life. I have been able to hold down a full time job, I have gone back to school and I have become a functioning member of society. As my mom says, "This plant has brought me my boy back."

I am terrified as to what would happen if this plant was taken away from me. I have had serious discussions about it with my doctor, my family and my NA sponsor. I am afraid that I would wind up back where I was a few years ago. My doctor has suggested that I look into other medical options such as suboxone, but my insurance does not cover it. It would be detrimental to not only me but millions of Americans. I feel as if you would see a spike in overdoses as people fall back into their addiction.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have any questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:39:05 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a mom of 7, a law enforcement officers wife. I have 3 autistic children and I suffer from lupus. I was a slave to pain medication for a long time. I had to take seizure medication, anti anxiety meds. Opioid pain meds. I was a zombie. I couldn't be a mother the way I needed to be. Then I discovered Kratom. It saved my life. I am 100% off of all medication. My seizures have stopped. My pain is minimal. I am a mother again. I am a wife again. If you stop letting this herb into the U.S....my only option is to become the slave that I was. I don't want to be another number on this opioid over dose list. My sister whom was addicted to heroin for years was able to quit the drugs...because of Kratom. It helps withdrawal symptoms almost 100%. Please listen to those of us that will be so negatively impacted by any sort of ban on Kratom. I am begging you. Don't take me from my family.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:29:56 PM

Dear Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6). I'm a forty-five year old teacher from (b) (6). I was hurt and disappointed with the recent FDA's smear campaign against Kratom. In the past, I've had great respect for the work of the FDA. I'm surprised that such an esteemed organization as the FDA has come out with such blatant misinformation on a tea that has been helping millions of people suffering from mental and physical illnesses.

I was introduced to Kratom by a friend. I brew the loose tea leaves and make an herbal tea about 3-4 nights a week. I have been a teacher for eighteen years, and although I truly love my job--it can be exhausting. I have found that Kratom gives me energy (but, unlike caffeine, it doesn't make me jittery) and a mild sense of well-being. Drinking Kratom tea has given me time back. I have energy after a long day at school and I am grateful for this. I have never experienced any negative side effects. Kratom tea has improved my quality of life.

I have always had adverse reactions to coffee, and I find Kratom tea to be a safe alternative. It has changed my life for the better. I fear that this new action by the FDA will only lead to more suffering and create more victims of the opiate epidemic. Without Kratom, my quality of life will suffer greatly and I don't want to become another unhappy American.

Thank you for your time and service,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:16:55 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 26 year old kratom user. I use kratom to deal with pain and anxiety. I am very against the FDA banning kratom, an idea I find will do nothing more then force hardworking, law abiding citizens to become criminals.
Keep kratom legal! It has helped me in more ways than I can count.

-(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom regulation
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:50:58 PM

To whom it may concern,

I study Global Disease Biology at (b) (6) and have been watching in horror as opioids kill dozens of Americans every day and the crisis continues to spiral out of control. Many of my instructors and research mentors who have worked in the public health field for decades admit that they have never seen a situation so dire and are uncertain as to what can be done to mitigate this emergency. The demand and price for pharmaceutical opioids on the illegal market has only been increased by bans and restrictions, while patients in healthcare settings with a genuine need for pain relief are now suffering from lack of access. Despite this, very few effective alternatives for acute or chronic pain have been proposed. I personally know elderly individuals and terminally ill cancer patients who have been denied adequate pain relief at the end of their lives. Meanwhile, the number of deaths and hospitalizations related to opioids obtained illegally continues to rise unchecked.

For my practicum project, I have been working on a literature review of existing research concerning the safety and efficacy of *Mitragyna speciosa* as a pain reliever and treatment option for opiate addiction in humans. Out of hundreds of publications currently available on the NCBI database, very few suggest any genuine risk of toxicity or harm to respiratory function from the active alkaloids. The potential for addiction may exist, but appears to be much lower than in other opioid receptor agonists. Anecdotal reports exist from around 30,000 individuals who claim that Kratom treated their pain and allowed them to stop taking pharmaceutical opioids. Many of my instructors who had never heard of Kratom until I proposed my project, have

expressed cautious optimism.

I am extremely disappointed and disturbed that in the midst of such an unprecedented epidemiological crisis, anyone could consider scheduling a substance that has any potential to prevent so much human suffering and death from continuing. While the FDA is concerned about 36 deaths that Kratom may have played a part in, 91 people die every day from opioids. Acetaminophen kills 9 people every day, and NSAIDs kill 45 and cause 282 hospitalizations. I found these statistics on the FDA's own website.

Kratom users come from a wide variety of backgrounds, but what they have in common is a desire to manage their medical conditions well enough to remain active, productive members of our society. If Kratom is scheduled, it will literally be a death sentence for many people. Chronic pain patients will be forced to quit working and either suffer constantly or return to using addictive prescription medications. Many former addicts will relapse, and overdose deaths will almost certainly continue to rise even higher than they currently are. An appropriate and reasonable solution would be to regulate Kratom as a dietary supplement and require vendors to test their products for contaminants and maintain standards for human consumption. I hope you will take my comments into consideration before making a decision that will further harm human lives and only add more fuel to the opiate crisis.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saved my life
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:33:34 PM

Hello,

I am a nurse who loves my job & a mother of 3. I had injuries that required pain medicine for 10 years. Then I took suboxone for 7 years because I was addicted to the pills. I NEVER thought I would be free from that nightmare. My life was in order. I was excelling at work. My kids were very well taken care of, but I felt so unhealthy.

I finally decided to stop taking suboxone. I was prescribed 24mg. I took 16mg for 3 days then quit. I got to day 6 with minimal withdrawals. But on Day 6 I woke up feeling so weak & called my mom to come help with my kids who were 2 months, 14 months & 9 years at the time. I made a post in my suboxone taper group & someone suggested Kratom. I actually had some in a drawer I had purchased a year earlier but never tried. By the time my mom made the 9 hour drive to our house, I felt so much better. I took Kratom every day for 2 months. I'm now able to go weeks at a time without it if I want & I feel amazing.. It never felt like a drug or made me feel a high. I just felt healthy. I had no desire to drink alcohol. My digestive & emotional health returned as soon as I began Kratom. It has made me fully present for my children & allowed me to finally be opiate free.

I am very discouraged you are considering making it illegal since it has saved my life. I am a responsible adult & should be able to determine what is best for me. If you make Kratom illegal you will be pushing patients to take opiates again. You will not be helping the opiate epidemic at all. I have met so many wonderful people in the Kratom community from all walks of life. Kratom has saved many from opiates, depression & chronic pain. Please consider the science before making a rash decision which would negatively effect so many Americans.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saved my life
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:31:41 PM

"I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom should NOT be banned
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:43:16 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 27 year old male from (b) (6) and I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I was addicted to opioid painkillers for over 5 years and was placed on a VERY dangerous and commonly abused drug called Suboxone. That is what you should ban. I was put on Suboxone and was a slave to it for 8 years! Kratom allowed me to get off of the Suboxone and not have the extremely ugly withdrawal associated with stopping Suboxone. I have been off of all pharmaceuticals for over a year now and Kratom has helped me make that possible. I'm a proud father of 2 children and a husband and I sell cars to support my family. Kratom has HELPED SO MANY PEOPLE IN MY COMMUNITY including myself and I'm appalled at the idea of it being banned by the FDA. Please reconsider this decision and continue to allow people to use the leaves of this amazing tree to treat their pain as well as other ailments. I urge you to look into how many people, even many in law enforcement, that have come to appreciate this plant and use it as an alternative, a SAFE alternative to PHARMACEUTICALS THAT ARE PROVEN TO BE DANGEROUS AND ADDICTIVE! Please think hard about this choice and read the stories of people like myself who have used this plant to overcome the grip of addiction to pharmaceutical painkillers and to other drugs, like Suboxone, that should NOT be used as treatments for addiction. Thank you for your service and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom!
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:20:13 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 41-year old woman from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I suffer from several chronic illnesses and before kratom I was prescribed opioids. Those medications were hard on my body and I became dependent. I was always scared to stop the medications because of withdraw and I didn't want to suffer in pain! With kratom I was not only able to discontinue the opioids without significant withdraw... I'm able to control my pain! Kratom has been an answer to my prayers.

Kratom has given me my life back the way opioids could never do. It doesn't make me sick, sleepy, or give me that foggy feeling opioids do. It gives me the pain relief and energy I need so that I'm able to hike and photograph again. Please don't take all that away from me!

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 4:27:21 PM

Dr. Gottlieb,

I am writing this letter to inform you on kratom tea.

I don't think you have ever tried it, because if you did, you would realize that a Starbucks coffee is more significant in its effects. Kratom tea is super benign , Similar to caffeine, and no way as harmful as nicotine, alcohol, or THC.

I would love to discuss this but I am sure you are busy and may never read this.

There is no way you can die from kratom, I think you would have to eat so much you couldn't do it. Kratom does not really get stronger the more you do. There is no motivation for someone to take a lot. Because it is a mild drug. Anyway, not sure why anyone cares about kratom, try it and you will realize that it is nothing like a real drug. And there is not one death from it. All deaths from kratom are poly-pharmacologic.

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:40:41 PM

Aside from Kratom saving my life from seizures and crippling pain which could only be treated with opioid pain medication. I was a slave to those pills. A zombie. Kratom saved my sister whom was addicted to heroin. I remember I had to take her children because she wasn't able to care for them due to how bad her addiction had taken over her life. We (my sister and I) went to Walmart with her children before I left town with them. My sister had to stop while shopping for the last time with her children and go into the bathroom and shoot up. She came out of that bathroom and it was so painfully obvious what she had done. She began to vomit uncontrollably. Her children didn't react as they must have seen this countless times. Eventually her children were handed over into the system. My sister came to my home to detox as this was the lowest point of her life. I've never seen anyone so sick in my life. She layed in bed crying, tense, cold, hot, vomiting, sweating... I gave her a small amount of Kratom. It didn't get her "high" it didn't number her as a drug...it took away the Extreme pain caused by the withdrawal. It took away the diarrhea, vomiting, shaking...it took away her withdrawal symptoms 100%. She was able to get up, get dressed, go look for work. Within a week this Kratom regimen had gotten her OFF heroin. She today has her children again. She has a full time job. Her own home. Please for me...for my sister. Don't set us up to get back on these pain meds and heroin. More people die daily from heroin and opioid pain meds than anyone has in the entire existence of Kratom.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 1:49:58 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Mitrygana Speciosa
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 4:24:12 PM

Dear Mr. Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6) .

I am a 27 year old pre-law student, I also wait tables on the side for extra money.

I am also a recovering heroin addict who has been clean for 2 years and four months. I have also been taking the herb Kratom for roughly two years.

I am very troubled by the recent action your administration has taken regarding Kratom. I am not only troubled for myself, I am troubled for the thousands of other people in similar positions as me. I fear that if a ban were to be instated it would cause great harm to our community, directly resulting in the deaths of many people.

I am not saying that Kratom is the sole cause of my sobriety, I work very hard to maintain it in all aspects of life. I am active in a twelve step program in my spare time, I try to help other people before I help myself.

Kratom works wonders for me, it truly does. I used to be prescribed RX medicine for my ADD as well as SSRIs for depression. With Kratom, I no longer have the need for such medications and find the side affects to be far less. I now able to be a productive member of society.

I know you are a busy person sir, but if you have time please check out <https://www.amerikankratom.org/> if you have further questions or feel free to contact me!

Thank you for your time and service to our great country sir,

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Cell Phone- (b) (6)

From: (b) (6) @comcast.net
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: My support of Kratom
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:38:05 PM

Dear Mr. Scott Gottlieb M.D.,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 40 year old professional adult from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions, that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I first heard about Kratom when seeking safer alternatives to help manage my chronic pain that I experienced due to severe arthritis in my back. I was put on a daily regimen of Norco's and was receiving cortisone injections several times a year. They were not working and it made it hard for me to function. The moment I started using Kratom, my pain dissipated drastically with no ill effects. I was also taking Lexapro for my severe anxiety that after a few years and continued increases on the dosage, it had stopped working. It took me months to wean myself off of Lexapro as the withdrawals were horrific. Kratom not only has allowed me to live pain free, but has also done a miraculous job of ridding the anxiety that I have had to deal with for most of my life.

I was petrified and full of anxiety for years just trying to get on an airplane. This was very discouraging as it stopped me from participating in vacations and even hindered me taking any promotions at work knowing I would have to travel. With Kratom, I can live my life free from anxiety that had taken over most aspects of my life. I am now able to do things physically and mentally that I have not experienced in years.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that the my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom.

If you have any questions about Kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep Kratom legal!
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 2:58:20 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Kratom has greatly improved my quality of life and your assessment is incorrect. Please don't take away our right to benefit from a plant that has killed less people in it's entirety of use than Tylenol kills in a week! We deserve the right to use this plant that the Earth has given us.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Leave Kratom Alone
Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2017 4:54:21 PM

COMMISSIONER-

Over 100's of people die each year from food allergies.

100's of Our dogs can die from eating raisins...the same ones we all eat.

About 1000 people die from going to the dentist each year.

Please Leave Kratom alone.

The idea that you would even bring this up when there is real work to be done making Americans safe from real, statistically SIGNIFICANT deaths and addictions to actual dangerous Opioids.. makes me worry that the FDA might be over funded...our perhaps somehow under the sway of pharmaceutical interests....that you should be protecting us against.

Please help to dismantle and defund the pharmaceutical companies that have profited from actual opioid sales, and refrain from squandering tax payers' money making us safe from plants.

(b) (6)

(Clean and sober American for over 28 years)

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Re: SAVE KRATOM
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:40:07 PM

I am a responsible 41 year old married mother of 2 who works full time. I have been using Kratom for almost 5 years and it helps me maintain my chronic back pain. I don't need to take any overpriced prescription 's to treat my pain anymore. I have never had any negative effects using Kratom. Because of Kratom I am able to do everyday activities that I wouldn't be able to do without Kratom helping me. Please keep Kratom legal.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Recent Statement Released by FDA
Date: Friday, November 17, 2017 3:05:56 PM

Hello my name is (b) (6) im a 32 year old stay at home mom living in (b) (6)

I completely support the use of Kratom as it saved my life. The statement made concerning kratom came as a shock to me. The stance your office has taken against kratom will hurt many many people across the country. I do agree more studies need to take place in regards to treating addiction, depression, anxiety, however the studies performed up to the point have shown the positive impact kratom potential has. The statement your office released may put an end to this important research.

A little more about me- I was an IV heroin/pain pill user for about 3 years. I tried rehab and relapsed shortly after. I ended up going into a medically assisted(suboxone) rehab clinic. Which did help me get off the illegal drugs. The suboxone treatment left me dazed all day everyday, my hair started falling out, and I became emotionally detached, almost in a dreamlike state. I tried weening off the suboxone and ended up getting worse withdraws then I had with the illegal drugs. During this time I was introduced to kratom. I began taking small doses of kratom while weening off of the suboxone, and to my surprise there were absolutely no withdraw symptoms.

Kratom changed my life. I felt normal again when I hadn't for years. I was able to reconnect with my family and friends. And when I stopped taking kratom I had no withdraw symptoms. For an addict like myself that was huge, I think we all fear withdraw irrationally. I have been clean and sober for over 3 years now.

Please reconsider your stance on this life changing plant. I am so thankful and lucky I was able to find it when I did, I hope others in a hopeless situation such as addiction have the chance for it to help them as well.

Thank you for you time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: About the problem with the kratom their is not one i have had digestive problems all my life it has been a big help with the kratom to control my choosing to wear a diaper or control it WITH KRATOM I PICK KRATOM.
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 2:58:37 PM

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Depakote
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 2:26:51 PM

Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6), I am currently 30 years old. I'm a highly intelligent however somewhat dysfunctional member of society. I live in (b) (6). I'm a former addict in recovery, no heroin. I've smoked tobacco or lived in a smokers house my whole life. In 2014 I experienced a small seizure like episode while driving. It left me disoriented, confused, and it temporarily limited my cognitive abilities. I'm fine now.

A little over two years ago I was prescribed genetic depakote to control supposed epileptic seizures. Over my time taking and withdrawing from this medication I experienced pretty much every negative symptom associated with it. Confusion, mania, rage, hostility, musculoskeletal pain, neuropathy, organ pain, bowel problems, night sweats, swelling glands, overall pain, extreme anxiety, almost complete loss of short term memory, the list goes on, however I have a more important issue to speak on.

While withdrawing/detoxing from this medication a naturopathic physician recommended I try Kratom. It had been recommended before to help with my anxiety issues. I never tried it before because of its supposed similarities to Opioids and the possibility of addiction or dependancy. I was so sick from the Depakote I was willing to try anything. I felt like I was dying. I've been told it cannot cause addiction but what I have personally experienced from it was undoubtedly an addiction.

I took the Kratom in raw powder form in 550mg capsules for no more than 6 weeks. Two capsules up to 3x daily. Never once did I experience intoxicating effects, negative side effects, my anxiety was gone, my pain was gone. I've been of the Kratom for about 3 weeks now. With No withdrawal symptoms, no addiction related issues, no problems. This powdered leaf helped me more with my overall anxiety than any approved medication had ever helped. I've taken a few anxiety medications and they all seem to make me feel more or less the same, slightly intoxicated and with withdrawal issues. It managed my pain better than any narcotic or non - narcotic medication that I have ever tried.

When you hear, read, and see these people who are stating this plant is saving lives I personally hope you listen with an open mind. I very clearly benefited immensely from it and experienced zero negative symptoms or reactions. We can die from over hydrating. Addiction is possible with any repetitive action. Too much of anything is or can be bad for you. I personally don't see how if taken responsibly this plant can be regarded the same as heroin or any of the other class 1 narcotics.

In my personal experience I have never experienced a withdrawal or detox anything like what I went through with the Valporic Acid. It was horrible and I firmly believe that stuff is poison. In my opinion Kratom is a hundred times more safe.

Feel free to contact me at this email address if you have any questions. I'm a very open and honest person.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Do not ban Kratom it is a medicine
Date: Sunday, December 03, 2017 3:38:42 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 20 year old occasional kratom user from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: FDA's position on the botanical "kratom"
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 4:44:53 PM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb,

I am writing to voice my adamant disagreement with and objection to the FDA's recent statements regarding an herbal supplement called kratom, as well as my opposition to any action that would result in kratom being banned. There is an overwhelming amount of research and data that directly contradicts the FDA's current position, from the university teams that are studying the botanical to this year's 8-Factor Analysis by the leading expert on kratom, Dr. Jack Henningfield, to the statements from other experts in the field such as Dr. Walter C. Prozialeck. An enormous body of evidence has been compiled and can be accessed here: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/OB_SMhCuwVcKjZ3p0amk4ZXpmSzg

My name is (b) (6) I'm 35 years old, I'm a married mother of one child, my husband has worked in law enforcement for 16 years, and I'm an office manager for (b) (6). I also have endometriosis, an incurable condition that causes intense pain on an intermittent basis. For the past four years, kratom tea has helped me cope with the symptoms of this condition without the use of opiate painkillers.

As I'm sure you're aware, in 2016 the DEA published a notice of intent for an emergency scheduling of kratom. This action was challenged by people like me, DEA received Dear Colleague letters from both the Senate and the House, requesting that DEA reconsider, and the emergency scheduling was withdrawn. DEA subsequently opened a comment period on the matter, resulting in over 20,000 comments - an unprecedented number - with the vast majority in favor of keeping kratom legal and available. So it's not just the data that's clear; the wishes of the people are also very clear.

Surely we are beyond pretending that banning substances actually makes them disappear. By "scheduling" or banning products, our government isn't actually controlling them; on the contrary, they are abdicating control. They are simply handing the regulation of that product over to the black market.

Addiction and drug abuse are rampant and escalating, which is just one reason why it's absolutely counterproductive to ban or restrict an herbal supplement that helps to support people's health and well-being, in turn reducing the use of prescription drugs.

Without kratom, which helps to soothe and ease the extremely painful symptoms I experience with endometriosis, my choices would be very limited. I would have to either take prescription opiates, which I am adamantly opposed to using, or undergo a hysterectomy at

the age of 35. Aside from the negative effects on my health, a hysterectomy would also be emotionally devastating, since it would prevent me from having any more children. I am not exaggerating when I say that kratom is what is preserving my fertility, albeit indirectly.

The existing research is overwhelmingly in favor of the safety of kratom. While attempting to smear and villainize kratom, the FDA has failed to mention that the number of negative incidents involving kratom is remarkably low, especially when compared to the number of negative incidents involving everything from energy drinks to over-the-counter medications to other common herbal supplements.

Furthermore, every single one of those negative incidents involved at least one of the following factors: combining kratom with multiple illegal substances; adulterated or contaminated products; and modified kratom products, meaning the plain leaf (normally crushed or powdered for use as a tea) was converted into a concentrated extract or tincture.

This does NOT mean that kratom should be banned or "scheduled." Instead, those who have studied kratom extensively are in favor of regulation that would require vendors to test their products for contamination and purity. Indeed, the reputable vendors already do this. We absolutely desire and recommend these kinds of quality-control measures, which would prevent most or all of those rare negative incidents. Most kratom is already sold in plain leaf form. If we had regulation requiring that kratom products be sold ONLY in plain leaf form, the sales of modified or concentrated products would be reduced even further.

Dr. Walter C. Prozialeck, one of the leading experts on kratom, summarizes this quite clearly: "After evaluating the literature, I can reach no other conclusion than, in pure herbal form, when taken at moderate doses of less than 10 to 15 g, pure leaf kratom appears to be relatively benign in the vast majority of users." (<http://jaoa.org/article.aspx?articleid=2588524>)

People have been using kratom responsibly for many years with no negative effects. Making kratom a controlled substance would cause irreparable damage to me personally, to thousands of others like me, and to our economy with the loss millions of dollars in legitimate sales and commerce, which would end up being shifted to the black market.

Please don't rob us of our choices and our freedom to make our own decisions about how we manage and support our health.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom free and available
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:06:24 PM

My name is (b) (6), I am a 48 yo male and live in (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom has allowed me to function close to normally and opiate-free even with a twisted scoliotic spine that i've suffered pain from since i was 16 yo. A friend with a severe pain condition told me about Kratom and it's only been a Solution for me since!

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:51:30 PM

Dear Scott Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6), I am a 27-year-old caucasian male, and your constituent, who is pursuing dreams in holistic health and alternative medicine with aspirations to become a Naturopathic Doctor (N.D.). I am currently planning to pursue education and new career opportunities as well as get involved with my local community to grow and provide organic produce in the region. I have been extremely excited about all the new life developments that have come my way the past few years and have been working towards my goals much more after finally finding the right path for myself. I am a person who strives to make the world a more positive place for everyone and in order to do that there must be fairness and justice on all levels of our society, as you know better than most I am sure.

I am writing to you regarding recent news about a campaign funded by the FDA that is trying to criminalize a plant medicine that I have personally used which could greatly affect my health and well-being, along with millions of others out there who suffer on a daily basis from various different health issues, by attempting to eliminate this herb that I find particularly safe and effective for pain management. I want to provide some basic information about the campaign to ban it and then I will explain my personal story about how I discovered this plant 2 years ago and how it has helped me. The FDA's shocking and forceful attempt to compare, and schedule, the alkaloids Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine, which are derived from the kratom plant (*Mitragyna speciosa*), as drugs on par with illicit substances is certainly disturbing to the thousands of people who use this herb to improve their life on a daily basis. This impulsive move could attempt to make kratom a Schedule 1 controlled substance with no medicinal value, which is simply untrue and misinformed in the face of recent research. This would put kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering from various conditions that is also helping to solve the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective, although mild, analgesic herb at a level of potency comparable to coffee. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) released a December 2015 report titled 'Kratom - *Mitragyna speciosa*, The Impact to Florida' and found, "Kratom does not currently constitute a significant risk to the safety and welfare of Florida residents. Additionally the report sites that the Florida Department of Health found there are no pervasive health issues that can be attributed to the ingestion of kratom products in Florida." Even more recent research at the University of Florida by medicinal chemistry professor, Chris McCurdy, Ph.D., has shown that kratom has potential to not only relieve pain but to do so in a way that is actually helpful with weaning addicts off of opioids. This researcher states that kratom "does not seem to have addictive potential or abuse potential." Lastly, there have been studies conducted by Dr. Jack E. Henningfield, Ph.D., who is Vice President for Research, Health Policy, and Abuse Liability and Professor of Behavioral Biology at The John Hopkins University School of Medicine, about the traditional use of kratom in its home countries of southeast Asia which have concluded the following statement: "Globally fewer than 100 (Serious Adverse Events) SAEs, primarily from Southeast Asia, have EVER been reported including kratom consumption. For perspective, it should be considered that kratom use is quite high in Southeast Asia, with likely over 1 million regular adult users in Thailand alone. A careful review of the case reports indicates that in most cases other causes, especially co-administered chemical substances or drugs, were likely responsible."

After all of my hard work and excitement lately, opportunities have arisen, but suddenly at the same time a dark cloud has appeared. Kratom is an herbal medicine that I have been using for almost 2 years on and off, and in that time it has absolutely changed my entire outlook on life to one far more positive than before. It gave me the relief I needed from my chronic spinal condition to help lift me up enough to see the light again; it has helped to restore my energy, passion, and drive to participate in society! I had all but given up because of my physical condition until a friend suggested this plant to me. Since then, I have learned to manage my finances better, moved away and graduated from an excellent massage school, and I am about to begin my career path while creating an online business and pursuing further education at the same time. It is truly remarkable what a simple herb can do for someone who has battled with consistent pain for over a decade, and since I take no synthetic medications, nor will I ever do so outside of surgical needs because of the side-effects and addictive potential, kratom is the perfect balance for me when I need medicine for the pain I deal with.

Let me give a brief history of my medical problems so that you can understand why I was in such a negative place before kratom found me. I was diagnosed at the age of 18 with scoliosis and spondylitis. This means that I have curvature of the spine in both the lumbar and thoracic regions which creates what is known as an S-curve because of its shape, and spondylitis is a type of arthritis of the spine which was caused by the scoliosis. Scoliosis is a physical deformity that I have had to struggle with my entire adult life. It has stripped away a lot of joy and freedom from my youth because it gives me pain, fatigue, anxiety, insomnia, and depression. Basically, it pushes everything out of balance and the best that can be done outside of major surgery is to treat the symptoms and continue with a routine

of physical exercise which involves plenty of stretching. Chiropractic care also helps, but it is not a long-term solution; there is no long-term solution. The surgery is not an option for me because it is so intensive that it often causes people to be in even more extreme pain afterwards and it is irreversible. I am not willing to take that risk so I have found various ways to manage and treat it myself, but kratom by far has been one of the greatest blessings I have found for this treatment protocol. The chronic pain is daily and varies in degree but it has always been uncomfortable at best and debilitating at worst. It is this pain that has essentially created all the other symptoms over time. The fatigue and depression came from the stress it put on my body as well as the inhibitions it created in my life. I could never go out and enjoy myself as much as my peers. The anxiety is caused because of the way my spine connects to my brain stem and vagus nerve. It causes a lack of connection between my brain and body which in turn distorts pain signals and wreaks havoc on my nervous system. This also varies in degree from day to day, so I never know how to be prepared. One day I could be happy and feel great, and then the next day I could be in so much pain that I wouldn't even want to get out of bed. This created such an up and down cycle in my life that I just became exhausted from the instability and chaos that my condition brought prior to kratom. It affected everything from relationships with loved ones to career and educational opportunities. On a deeper level it affected the relationship I had with myself and my own life as my sense of value and purpose dwindled from the constant weight of my condition. I felt I would always have to live under the shadow of the condition. Kratom is the only medicine that I have found as a safeguard against those days that could pull me into a slump or anxiety attack. It wipes away all of my issues without any negative side effects. Research shows that it causes no harm to the body, and the most undesirable effect I ever feel is nausea, which occurs only if I take it too early in the morning on an empty stomach; the same side effect happens with vitamins, so I have learned to eat something small when I take either. I use it responsibly and in moderation only when needed. I have experimented with different dosages and have found my balance at this point; which is anywhere from 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon. It has restored my motivation entirely and even inspired me to push beyond my current goals and take on new challenges!

I want to note that I am not against regulating this plant to have an age restriction, but I certainly am against banning it entirely because it is literally the only medicine out there that works for me (and many others)- and I have searched for years for relief. In fact, I think age restriction would be a great idea so that it would be viewed as a more respectable herbal medicine; this could even help discourage irresponsible people from misunderstanding the purpose of this plant. It is extremely bitter and not a choice for recreational use, in my opinion, but at least age restriction would create an additional safety feature as more research is still being conducted on the herb. From what I understand, it brings tens of millions in revenue and that seems like a reliable source of business and future jobs in a new industry for the country. It is far safer than alcohol and opiates which are both legal with regulations. Florida, my home state of Georgia, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Iowa, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Illinois recently opted not to ban kratom on the state level before the federal actions came into play- while some allow it to be sold without any regulation, most of these states put a simple age restriction on the plant which seems to be the most fair policy that would create the least amount of damage to the whole.

I have been using this herb for the past 2 years, combining it with yoga, diet, exercise, and other herbal supplements, and I have NEVER found a medicine as effective in treating my individual variety of health issues as kratom does. It has a synergistic effect that has literally changed my life by gently releasing my pain, uplifting my mood, and giving me energy while also relaxing my nervous system. While I can see that yoga and exercise will definitely help me in treating my scoliosis over the long-term, the short-term solution is not as easy to treat. Some days I need help from herbal medicines for symptoms that arise in my body even after I have performed my workout routine. Synthetic pharmaceuticals are just not an option for my life. They are not worth the risks as they often make me either sick to my stomach, extremely anxious, or just completely oblivious to my environment which is honestly dangerous. The only times I have ever used them were after surgeries I have had, and although they relieved pain they were far too strong to use for pain management as I need it and I did not like the way they made me unable to feel my body or function in daily life. I do not like to feel numb in that way or out of control. Kratom actually helps me to function and focus while relieving pain in a way that is not 'sedative'. Kratom is my safety net when I need fast, short-term pain relief to start my morning. Mornings are often the worse for me and setup the pace of my entire day. I use kratom on mornings when I am sore, fatigued, or generally depressed as it can treat any and all of the symptoms above. It raises my alertness and mental clarity within an hour after ingesting it. It is honestly comparable to coffee in potency, so I tend to think of it as an herbal tonic similar to that of the common morning drink. Unfortunately, coffee does not have pain-relieving qualities and it is a nervous system stimulant that causes me to be rather jittery and anxious much of the time, so it does not usually work for me and I can only drink it sparingly if at all.

I plead with you to please reconsider your stance on kratom. I am concerned that this action by the FDA will only lead to more unnecessary suffering and tragedy. There are many people out there who have much worse conditions than me, and even addictions (which kratom has shown to help with recovery from), that would likely be impossible to manage for them without this herb to support them at this time. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of this country, that I proudly serve, will not be the same without kratom. I think we need the conversation to be aimed at research and regulation, not prohibition, and America could be the leader in creating resolutions for greater integration of natural medicines into our culture and our world. We are already seeing the great benefit to both economy and public health with the booming cannabis business in Colorado, Oregon, and other states; and cannabis is far more powerful of an herb than kratom so it does not seem logical to ban something on the same level

as coffee at this revolutionary time. It also seems like a double standard to attempt to ban such a mild herb when intensely stimulating substances like alcohol and tobacco are legal, advertised by our media, and glorified as socially acceptable drugs even though they cause thousands of deaths and addictive issues each year and are likely far more dangerous than kratom, coffee, and cannabis. I want to believe that the nation I am so very proud of is intelligent and self-aware enough to realize the blatant hypocrisy in this attempt to ban a simple herb, and I hope once this is realized that we choose to take a new direction with our policy which focuses on regulation, taxation, and marketing rather than prohibition because it seems a waste to completely ignore the benefits and opportunities that kratom could give to America. We strive on innovation in this country and I believe it is time that we begin looking at pain and addiction crises in a way that is more open-minded towards helping people to recover their lives rather than ostracizing them or limiting their options for their own health and wellness.

I feel this action against kratom is misguided and the FDA should be looking at tightening restrictions on synthetic drugs, like opiates and antidepressants, which are truly causing much of the destruction of our society that we see today, instead of trying to ban gentle herbs which have been used for thousands of years without any major issues. I will not use synthetic drugs for weekly self-care no matter what happens. If for some reason this ban goes through after all of our efforts to educate, research, and demonstrate its safety then I will have to search again to find another legal herb that is equivalent to kratom; and surely there are plenty in nature that are at least similar, which makes me wonder how many times we will go through this same senseless debate over other herbs before learning to innovate a new policy and mindset and stop criminalizing living plants and medicines. I just hope that I can find one as balanced as kratom is if that time comes. I know many people hold this same stance. This action is unnecessary when there are plenty of examples in the world showing the safe and effective use of kratom in societies and cultures abroad. Overall, I have hope for politicians and common people to see the light here, and on a larger scale I am glad to see we are progressing into a more holistic future of health and wellness as this will only help our great country to thrive. However, in contrast I think to push for any laws that would ban such a useful and harmless medicine when there are comparable herbs, and synthetic drugs, still legal would not only be a bit futile in my opinion, it would also be a step backwards. We cannot just blindly outlaw nature and expect positive results, but fair regulation of plant medicines would be an excellent place to start finding a compromise and a balance.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit www.americkratom.org. Thank you for your time and service to the country.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal for your Constituents
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 1:12:47 PM
Attachments: [Kratom_Infographic.png](#)

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 47-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

KRATOM BY THE NUMBERS

26,000 AMERICANS

have asked President Trump to keep kratom legal.

A 2016 petition supporting kratom attracted more than

142,000 SIGNERS

from the U.S.



99.1%

OF 23,000+ COMMENTERS

to the DEA in late 2016
opposed a kratom ban.

1,175 doctors, vets,
scientists & law officers
told the DEA they
don't want a kratom ban.



**A BIPARTISAN
62 U.S. HOUSE & SENATE MEMBERS**

asked the DEA not to proceed
with a ban on kratom.



0%

OF EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS/EMTs

responding to an online survey
supported a ban on kratom.



Kratom consumers report that the
botanical supplement is used for
many things including

**MINOR PAIN AND TO
PROMOTE A SENSE
OF HEALTH &
WELL-BEING.**



ZERO DEATHS

have been
proven to be
caused by
kratom.



One of the world's leading experts on drug
abuse and addiction says kratom has

NO MORE POTENTIAL FOR "SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER" THAN CAFFEINE ...

Chamomile, St. John's Wort, and nutmeg are dietary
supplements that are comparable to kratom in terms
of the potential for addiction. There is no basis for
classifying kratom like heroin or LSD.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal! Do the right and humane thing!
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 8:32:03 AM

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom legal!
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 2:35:42 PM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb,

I along with countless other (b) (6) and Americans, your constituents, use Kratom to provide effective safe pain relief that I used to rely on opiate medications for. I find it more effective with far fewer side effects and my long time trusted doctor has advised me that it is safe and carries far fewer risks. I urge you to exempt natural botanicals from the planned SITSA act in order to prevent a health care crisis for myself and all other Kratom users who would be forced to return to the more addictive and dangerous alternative of opiate medications for pain management. Please respond to the needs of your constituents and the advice of medical professionals and do not allow this safe botanical to be banned in the name of fear. We should not be stepping backwards in our drug policy and potentially imprisoning citizens claiming to protect them from a plant that is known to have very low risks for users.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 12:02:58 AM

Dear Sir,

Please do not make kratom difficult to buy or sell. The opioid crisis can be helped by this amazing botanical.

Please review the research and do not succumb to the external pressures creating inaccurate representations about kratom. I've used kraftom and find it beneficial for my back pain. It's relaxing and alleviates stress. I use no other drugs and limit my consumption of virtually any other substance.

I'm convinced that kratom should be made widely available with appropriate guidelines and no restrictions.

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom - Daily Use for 3 Years
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 5:47:28 PM

Hello,

We should not include Kratom among the SITSA Act as it is not a dangerous botanical. I have used Kratom daily for 3 years with the worst effects being constipated. I suffer from depression and anxiety. This botanical has helped me tremendously over the course of the last three years. My quality of life has increased phenomenally. Giving the Attorney General power to ban certain kinds of botanicals is egregiously wrong. Please do not include kratom on the SITSA Act as it will certainly decrease my quality of life and cause me to resort to dangerous pharmaceuticals that I have a right to withhold from my body.

For the facts, please see the AKA (American Kratom Association):

<https://www.amerikratom.org/science>

Thanks,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom : PLEASE read my story
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:27:00 PM

To Whom It May Concern at the FDA:

I BEG of you to listen to my story.

My name is (b) (6) I am a 38 year old upstanding citizen, husband and father of two little girls.

I used to be a Kratom user, and the Godsend it has been to my life simply cannot be overstated.

I have suffered from nervous system disorders since high school, (ADD, anxiety, etc...) the worst of which however was a severe acne skin picking disorder that lasted from my teens through my mid 30s, almost 15 years of my life. During this time my face was permanently scabbed, picked, and full of pus and bloody lesions. I covered it all up with makeup, (and I am I'm a guy) If you saw what I looked like or had any idea of how I suffered you would be horrified! It was atrocious. I spent a year in major intensive therapy for it, and tried MANY different types of RX medications and drugs including Paxil, Effexor, Xanax, Prozac, Clonazepam, Valium, Celexa and even alcohol and marijuana to attempt to rid me of this behavior; yet it all was a lost cause. That was of course until I found Kratom.

In my case Kratom allowed me to COMPLETELY STOP my skin picking disorder completely. It literally SAVED MY LIFE, as I was a recluse and I was suicidal due to how I looked and felt. If it were not for Kratom my wife would not have a loving husband and my children would not have a father. I am sure most of you can relate to that. Kratom also completely removed the anxiety and depression that came with my disorder. After about 6 months I was able to stop using the Kratom just fine. It had zero side effects! None of what I just told you was exaggerated in any way.

I implore you from the depths of my heart and soul to please please do the common sense thing and keep this amazing plant legal, educate yourselves on the facts. Please DO NOT let fear mongering tactics, ignorance, lies and distortions take this miracle plant away from us.

I will just add one more thing, which is that in a society where we have an opiate crisis, why would you take away the solution to that problem? Kratom not only prevents the use of hard and dangerous drugs, it enables addicts to stop using them! Making it illegal would be like shooting America in the foot. Who wins here...?

Please do the common sense thing and re-evaluate the FDA analysis. Kratom is truly a gift from God and truly benign. Please, please, please let sanity prevail.

Thank you so very much for your time. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)@juno.com
To: [Commissioner.FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 3:33:23 PM

I am not a user of kratom but I understand it is something very useful and helpful to many, many people. I am writing in support of keeping kratom legal and easily accessible for the many people, including some I know, so they can get the relief they have not been able to get through the medical route. Please, do not take this relief from them or make it more difficult to access.I

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 3:35:15 PM

Hello this is (b) (6) I'm a 39 year old kratom advocate with a very bad back and just wanted to let you know I have been taking kratom daily for over a year and it has helped tremendously. I work in a steel mill for long hours 7 days a week and couldn't be doing it without this miracle plant. There's a lot of lies and misconception about this plant. The said plant does not get you high at all and no loss of motor skills, but does work great as a natural painkiller and am happy to say I have almost completely off of my tramadol that I have taken daily as a result from my previous back injuries. And if banning this is a move because it will hurt the money made from pharmaceuticals , well that's really sad. I really hope you will take a look at the actual science that supports this before making a decision to schedule this natural miracle plant that has saved so many lives and will continue to in the future.

Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE Droid

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:30:24 PM

My name is (b) (6) I am a 44 year old female from (b) (6).
I would like to voice my support of kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom a plant, helping millions of people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions (including myself) that is also safely easing the nations opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin (which I lost my brother to in 2014). It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective pain killer that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.
I suffer from depression and chronic pain, have used kratom for a year and a half and have also quit self medicating with alcohol.
Kratom is an actual safe alternative to legal and illegal drugs and my well being has been enhanced greatly by this herb.
Thank you for your services

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:49:37 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 5:09:17 PM

Hi, my name is (b) (6). I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

I use kratom on a daily basis. It has saved my life. I went from having to use addictive and dangerous narcotics to using the dried leaves of a plant to help with my daily pain. It doesn't affect my mental ability, my coherency, or my judgment.

Please stop any action being taken against my life saver, kratom. Thank you in advance for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 5:20:58 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 30 year old woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I originally found kratom through an online support group for chronic pain from endometriosis. I have had surgery and tried multiple different treatment methods to no avail. I suffer almost daily from this debilitating pain. It has kept me from doing so many things, including job advancement as I was routinely missing work due to debilitating pain. I found kratom and was absolutely astonished at the relief I found. It helped provide me with energy, a sense of well being, and relief from intractable pain. It also didn't cause me all the unpleasant side effects that I experienced when taking narcotics or hormonal treatments.

Since taking kratom for the last 18 months I have since had a huge increase in my quality of life. I have been able to show up to work more reliably, I have been able to discontinue the use of legally prescribed narcotics, and now don't take anything more than kratom and NSAIDs for my pain. I don't imagine that kratom has cured me. Unfortunately my condition will last for many more years, until I am a much older woman. However it has allowed me to get back to my old self, a person who actually takes part in life rather than just observing.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 5:48:11 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 36 year old living in (b) (6). About 10 years ago I began self medicating with prescription opiate medication to treat physical and mental pain issues.

Fast forward to 2013... by then I had become a full blown addict, just barely keeping my life together enough to hold down a job and pay my rent. At that point I was arrested and incarcerated for selling prescription opiates to support my habit.

When I got out of jail I was one of the lucky ones and I managed to find a good job and started to get my life back together. Unfortunately the disease of addiction was not finished with me and I found myself using again before long.

That is when I learned about Kratom. Kratom is a wonder drug that allowed me to leave the world of opiates behind. I successfully use it to treat my physical and mental issues and I no longer have to worry about breaking the law and possibly going back to jail. I am now a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Please, I beg you, do not put this miracle plant at risk. As a member of the kratom community I fear that doing so would have horrible, irreversible consequences.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.
Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 6:42:35 PM

Hello Commissioner,

I am a responsible kratom user and 40 year old mother of twin 4 year old boys. After suffering from severe postpartum depression and prescription medications failed to help (anti-depressants, mood stabilizers, benzos), I started looking for a natural alternative and found kratom.

Kratom has given me my life back and has enabled me to be the best mother I can be to my wonderful children. There is no 'high' with kratom, just an improved mood/positive outlook and energy (similar to a cup of coffee) to help me get through the day. I would be devastated if kratom was no longer available to me.

I ask that you please reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for its benefits.

Thank you so much for your time & consideration.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 7:35:48 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 37 year old male from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

-How you came to use kratom..... (did you learn about it in a chronic pain support group, etc?)

-What ailments you suffer, what treatments haven't worked (prescriptions, surgery, etc.), how long you've been dealing with your condition, how long you've been using kratom and how many/what medications you've been able to quit.

-What kratom means to you (has it given you your life back, have you gone back to work, can you play with your, exercise or travel, etc., something anecdotal about why kratom is important and should be available).

-Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 7:59:19 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 22-year old man from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

At an early age I sustained spinal cord damage from a combination of genetics and a car accident. Ever since my life has been transformed by pain and I am unable to do many physical activities I loved to do before and yet I have to continue to work as I disability would not come close to paying cost of living in (b) (6) I use kratom and CBD as those are the most effective pain relieving medications that I have access to as the DEA's cracking down on prescriptions has left my doctor unable to give me adequate pain relief. In fact I find kratom a much better and healthier alternative to extended release oxycodone or morphine. I am not a candidate for surgery so this is something I must deal with on my own.

Because I have access to kratom I am able to work again and exercise to heal but without kratom even walking for more than 30 minutes can leave me wrecked for several days.

Kratom has given me another chance at being a functioning member of society instead of disabled and depressed and banning it will only benefit big pharmaceutical executives and everyone else will suffer

Thank you for hearing my story,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:20:04 PM

Dr Gottlieb:

I would like to express my concerns regarding the possible banning of kratom. I am a 74 year old man who was introduced to kratom about two years ago. I have taken it for relief of joint pain, as a substitute for caffeine and as an energy enhancer for exercise. Additionally, I appreciate the properties of mood uplifting. I consume very little alcohol and am not using any other medication. I have never experienced anything that would be related to craving, addiction or withdrawal. I have followed the reports relating to negative incidents and certainly understand why it has attracted the attention of the FDA. On balance, however, given the preponderance of positive experience associated with kratom's use, I would hope that your response would be measured, encouraging real scientific investigation, and come up with a reasonable regulation on what I strongly feel is a highly beneficial substance.

Yours truly,

(b) (6)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:56:00 PM

I'm a 44 yr old responsible adult kratom consumer of nearly 3 yrs.

I have gone through all the "FDA approved" treatments & other therapies. Many have left me traumatized and damaged.

I finally found something that works, is safe, doesn't have all the negative effects I've dealt with for over 20 years. Now you want to take it from me. Ignoring the scientific data. Ignoring the researchers & experts. Ignoring the millions of people who are literally screaming for our lives. I will NOT go back on your "approved" drugs. There's worse things than being bedridden.

(b) (6)

#IAmKratom #KeepKratomLegal
#NOSchedule!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 10:07:18 AM

Good morning. My name is (b) (6) and I am writing this email to help you understand why I use Kratom. I have chronic knee pain which lead to a Oxycodone addiction which I struggled with for 3 years. I was in serious trouble and in a last ditch effort I gave Kratom a shot. Not only did Kratom help with my knee pain but it allowed me to quit opiate pain pills completely. I have now been opiate free for 2 years with 0 relapses. I am a responsible adult. I take 1 teaspoon of kratom in the morning and I am relatively pain free through my strenuous work day. Kratom has saved my life and I urge you to please reconsider any Kratom ban. Thank you

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 11:46:42 AM

I believe Kratom is a natural and excellent medicine for withdrawal from opiates, anxiety and depression!

It should be available to all who need it.

It is a harmless leaf no different than coffee!

It would be ridiculous to make it illegal.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 7:54:35 PM

I am a 69 year old woman with chronic lyme disease and often get flare ups that can be extremely painful. When that happens, along with taking antibiotics or antibacterial herbs I use kratom (green vein mango da) in low dosages 3-4 x/day. This not only helps with pain but also reduces inflammation. I do not want to have to resort to prescription pain meds which are not good for my mind or body. Please understand that kratom is not an opioid. It does act on the opioid receptors which is why it is so effective at reducing pain levels.

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 7:53:40 PM

Hi,

My name is (b) (6). I am 29, married, have a full-time job and own a home. I am a responsible adult who uses Kratom to improve my health and well-being. I have a chronic autoimmune disease that has no cure. I am in no way addicted to Kratom, but my quality of life would significantly decrease if it were made illegal.

I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of Kratom as well as testimonies like mine proving its benefits.

Thank you,

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 11:00:05 AM

Dear FDA, I am a 33 year old man In (b) (6) I found out about kratom from a good friend that has cancer and takes kratom for her pain because she can't stand the opioid medications the doctor gives her to help with the cancer because they make her feel sick and have withdrawals and leave her with no appetite. I used kratom to ween myself off of painkillers that I had become addicted to after a major car accident. Before kratom I had no hope of getting off pain pills. now I take no opiates and know other people that have been able to help themselves in the same way. We beg you, please double check your kratom research. I believe it is much safer than any opiates that the doctor can give for pain. I do not believe that kratom on its own has caused any deaths. I also believe that if kratom becomes a scheduled substance it will be out of reach of many people that need it or can benefit from its use. I believe kratom could play a major role in helping this country get out of its opiate epidemic. Please do the right thing and regulate kratom but do not make it a scheduled drug. The people of this country will have a much Better chance of conquering opiates with kratom readily available. Yours so truly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 12:15:39 PM

Dr. Gottlieb -

I am a responsible adult who uses kratom to improve my health and well being. Please take a look at the true science behind kratom (without the politics) and reconsider your stance.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 8:30:14 PM

The FDA wants to ban Kratom. They want to do this so big Pharma can sequence a drug from the plant and then eliminate the completion. That is criminal.

The interesting health **benefits** of **Kratom** leaves include their ability to lower blood pressure, relieve pain, boost metabolism, increase sexual energy, improve the immune system, prevent diabetes, ease anxiety, help with addiction, eliminate stress, and induce healthy sleep.

[8 Impressive Benefits of Kratom Leaves | Organic Facts](#)

[8 Impressive Benefits of Kratom Leaves | Organic Facts](#)



8 Impressive Benefits of Kratom Leaves | Organic Facts

Benefits of kratom leaves include relief from pain, stress, anxiety, & mood swings. Kratom leaves also help ...

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 1:16:34 AM

I am a 72 year old Nurse Practitioner who suffers every day from lupus, RA arthritis, and nerve pain from 2 cancer surgeries. I used to have to use 4-6 norco a day . Now that I have Kratom I am able to go days using only Kratom. Please leave me this safe wonderful plant alone! When Big Pharma tried to patent a Drug off a herbal medicine it doesn't work— remember Marinol made from marijuana? Awful didn't work. This plant is perfect the way it is. I have been using this about a year now, and I believe the Kratom sellers do a great job of policing themselves. I've never gotten something else other than Kratom and if someone did it would be all over the internet and they would be out of business!!! Please leave this wonderful life saving plant alone. Don't force chronic pain suffers back on narcotics. Sincerely, (b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 8:51:30 AM

Hi. My name is (b) (6) im 34 years old. From (b) (6). Ive used kratom over 5 years. My dr is who told me about it to help get me off oxy cotton. Witch i was on for over 10 years. By the fda banning kratom all ur doing is helping big pham create more addicts

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, December 03, 2017 3:32:56 AM

Hi

I am someone who unfortunately has gotten dependent on opioids. The one thing that has helped me through withdrawal is kratom. I can't imagine not having kratom to help through the horrors of withdrawal. Please keep Kratom legal!!

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 10:54:31 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

I was addicted to opioids for many years due to several back surgeries and getting off of it is very difficult. If it wasn't for Kratom, I would be still suffering and I beg you to look at the numerous pros that it offers versus the alternative - opioids, heroine, etc. Thanks

(b) (6)
Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 3:35:59 PM

Hello Dr. Gottlieb,

I am writing to help convince you to keep kratom available in the USA. It has helped several of my clients detox from opiates and remains a safe and relatively side effect free substance that functions as a supplement and aid for drug detox among other milder uses. Keeping the opiate crisis in mind when deciding on the future of kratom, you should know its use in the community of drug users for detox as well as its profile of safety compared to opiates and artificial opiates. In this time of deregulation, it would be a mistake to take away one of the few tools that addicts have to ameliorate their illness and step down from severe addiction to pills and heroin.

Best regards,

(b) (6), PsyD

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom advocacy - please check the 8 factor analysis and science
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:22:24 PM

Dear commissioner,

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 34 year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against it. Scott Gottlieb's FDA announcement puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental/physical conditions, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective and natural relief to pain and anxiety, without respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. It does not bond to the same receptors as opiates which can cause such a reliance on it.

I know it is helping veterans with PTSD, and other injuries/medical issues they've been stuck with. I understand it is your duty to require scientific proof that it is safe, and can help consumers more than put them at risk. The American Kratom Association did commission an 8 factor analysis that proves it, while the FDA's 8 factor analysis seems to have skewed science that is biased in your opposition.

There are thousands of testimonials in how it has helped consumers, not to mention the hundreds, if not thousands of years of its use.

We understand it may need regulation to keep consumer safe, but in no way does it need to be banned, that would do more harm then good.

You are worried about the opiod crisis, and don't want to approve this as a reasonable alternative. I understand that, but kratom still is a better solution than a problem. So keep testing it, but do not ban it unless you find irrefutable evidence that it is too harmful. Test research on consumers, people who have used it for 10, 20 plus years. 'The proof is in the pudding' so to speak.

Banning kratom will promote a rise in opiod use, and take away the peaceful relief so many have received from it.

I believe you need to recheck the science and allow testing to be done, and regulating would be accepted, so it is clean and safe.

It has caused me no issues and it's easy to know what is an acceptable amount. One cannot overdose on kratom, since it is natural, it has a natural way of telling the body when it is content. EMT's approve it as safe.

There are thousands of deaths a year from opiod addiction, tylenol, household cleaners etc. There are no deaths associated with kratom, only the reported 36 deaths- where the victims had also taken other drugs like muscle relaxers, and antidepressants with it. So how does that prove anyone can die from kratom?

The autopsies do not prove kratom as the real cause of death.

It is a natural, God given botanical that is doing wonders for people.

It is our God given right to use the plants and foods with His blessing.

Not everyone using kratom has had an opiod addiction, although for some, they use kratom to deal with the addiction well. But banning it would not only put those consumers at risk, but also the thousands who it helps other ailments with.

I believe banning it is secretly defending 'Big Pharma' and its opiate profits, while at the same time the FDA, and DEA are pushing for control of the opiate crisis.

Why were some of its alkaloid strains patented by a drug company? To market it later. So while they know it's useful, they are trying to ban it and say it is harmful, so they can later make a new

drug out of it anyways; rather than letting the free market produce it, and let so many small companies thrive. That's how it appears to kratom advocates.

I discovered it and it helped me with my knee and wrist injuries, which are untreatable by doctors; and they cannot prescribe me any medications to deal with them. Having surgery would possibly make things worse for me. I was out of options, and in pain for 15 years, until discovering kratom. It also eases the anxiety, and allows me to function normally as the law abiding, professional adult I am. It also puts my back pain at ease. (I broke my back at age 18 and have a curved spine)

Please see these supporting documents:

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9ba5da_64ffca75fd0543b4b42da9e029e2ea76.pdf
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B_SMhCuwVcKjZ3p0amk4ZXpmSzg

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs, with important benefits for many people with many issues, and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, and would cause a world of stress on all of it's consumers. It is a wonderful plant, and I feel so grateful to know it exists when I need a little help. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom analysis
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 1:02:40 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6) I'm 29 years old from (b) (6) I would like to voice my support for kratom and disagree with the FDA and their recent campaign and analysis on kratom. Kratom helps millions of people deal with suffering as a safe and natural solution. While I agree that further research may be needed, but to date, kratom has been shown to be an effective pain killer that does not cause respiratory depression, the main cause of death from opiate overdose. In fact, as far as I know, none of the deaths attributed to kratom have been from kratom alone, they are always shown to be mixed with other substances.

Kratom has been a blessing for me personally. I had been struggling with alcoholism for a few years before I found kratom. Since that point I have been able to go back to school, find an excellent job, get married and buy a house, with my first baby on the way. This would not have been possible if I had continued my previous path of alcohol abuse.

In conclusion, kratom has helped me change my life in the best way possible. I fear what could happen if kratom were made illegal, not only for myself, but for millions of other responsible adults who have been able to change their life for the better with the help of this plant.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and how it saved my life.
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 11:57:40 AM

Good Morning , My name is (b) (6) , I am 24 years old from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I was on Suboxone from a young age and am just one of the millions of young people touched by the opiate epidemic . I grew up in a small city called (b) (6) , where crushing and snorting pills was something that I would say 68 percent of the students in High School had done or recreationally participate in. When my opiate abuse started I remember another student telling me “ you know that you should be careful with using those , because it will disable your ability to have fun without being on the drug .” In my head that sounded impossible . I had such a positive life and was spoiled as a child having so much opportunity that many others did not have, I was spoiled. Then moving forward this went from a weekend activity to a few times a week and then onto a daily basis . Before I knew it myself and at least twenty people in my graduating class had an opiate addiction. To be brief I lived in hell at a young age , I became homeless and then with all the will power I had found a Suboxone clinic and effectively did not abuse the program and stayed consistently on Suboxone for 5 years with out relapse. Sounds effective and like some sort of success story right? The switch from Oxycodone to Suboxone was easy because Suboxone was a much stronger drug and the high lasted for hours and had A very powerful half life making it easy to function in society. Still in my experience when on this clinic drug you by all means are not functioning normal , you feel like a cancer patient , you are afraid to do things like travel or see people unless its within the first hour after dosing this drug . Quite literally living under the dictatorship and being owned by this chemical. After years of being numb to the world and living in between the boundaries of Suboxone letting the chemical own me , I was tired of getting sick on a weekly basis the drug never agreed with my stomach , and wanted to know what it feels like to be human again, know what it feels like to have excitement and peace with life itself. The only way I can explain it is if you can remember what it feels like to be a kid on the holidays and how the older you get that excitement and energy disappears. In a sense when your life revolves around substance your brain defiantly does not process the same way and everything just feels somewhat dry . The only thing that there is to look forward to is that 15 min buzz after dosing. Everything feels the same , consistently level ,and more lows than highs. I started researching ways to comfortably get off Suboxone , I lowered my dose to bare minimum with the clinics assistance and the withdrawals where unbearable it seemed that there is no escape . After months of research I came across an article written by a doctor with a guide to using Kratom to get off Suboxone or any other opiates . I was extremely nervous but started to experiment with it . I then took the shot , Kratom twice a day morning and night , the withdrawals where defiantly there but Kratom made this comfortable and tolerable. After day 3 I gave my prescription to my father and gave this recovery 100 percent. After almost a month of using Kratom on a daily basis, I easily without any hesitation limited this daily use to weekly , weekly to monthly , monthly to none at all. In my experience showing minimal to none as far as addictive characteristics with Kratom. Suboxones physical withdrawals lasted over 40 days , I was sick for 40 days not a month not a week 40 days and then it took an additional 4 and a half months for my brain to heal and to feel emotions I haven't experienced in years. Kratom made this possible , I currently am not taking any substances except for tea and coffee mixed with a lot of exercise . Kratom made this possible for me and I really am confident if I didn't find Kratom I would still be on Suboxone or worse . I don't

need Kratom anymore but when I saw the news with the FDA ,I wanted to share my experience and I wish that I was not in the back of a car with more time to type something professional . In short my success story is now I run a business and have 120 employees , feel incredible and know that Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 5:03:51 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

After years of suffering chronic pain, I recently discovered *Mitragyna Speciosa*, commonly known as the kratom leaf. Kratom is a natural supplement derived from the tropical trees of Southeast Asia. Before explaining how my life has changed as a result, I should provide some background information as to my lifelong struggle with chronic and often debilitating pain.

I was born with scoliosis, and suffered both chronic neck, back, and shoulder pain for as long as I can recall. I also have endometriosis, which significantly affects my ability to function for one to two weeks of each month. I was ultimately diagnosed with depression, anxiety, and attention-deficit disorder in addition to (and potentially resulting from) the near-constant pain. I became unable to work, and was granted Social Security Disability Insurance at 30 years old. Prior to this, I was employed at a residential music school for young adults with intellectual disabilities. The pain and resulting anxiety/depression became too much to manage, and I was given no choice but to leave after 8 years at the school.

The following two years were spent going back and forth between appointments: x-rays, physical therapy (3x/week), individual psychotherapy, OB-GYN appointments, chiropractic sessions, etc. Each of these were financed by state-funded health care, which cost tens of thousands of dollars per year. I personally spent hundreds on therapeutic massage, at-home electrotherapy, joint pain relief, acupressure pillows, and daily medication to manage my symptoms. For depression, I was prescribed (at different stages) Prozac, Wellbutrin, Zoloft, Lamictal, Clonazepam, and Methylphenidate for ADHD. I was also prescribed a low-dose estrogen birth control, to control endometriosis. I felt very little relief from my symptoms, and ultimately began to spend my days in bed, utterly useless to myself, my family, and society in general. Those around me (including medical professionals) encouraged me to try medical marijuana, but my tolerance was so low that it only exacerbated my anxiety. It was then suggested that I try a natural supplement known as kratom.

I had heard about kratom, but was dubious of any natural supplement that boasted not only pain relief, but focus, energy, and minimization of anxiety. After months went by with no reprieve from my pain, I asked myself: Why not try it? What could I possibly lose that I haven't already lost? Though I read articles on the addiction potential, I was fully aware that much of what is presented online derives from personal opinion, and often leans towards catastrophic thinking and fear-mongering. I already knew what opiate withdrawal felt like, due to having been prescribed opiates for pain relief in the past. I now felt prepared to try something different, and would do so independently.

Once the kratom arrived, I carefully measured 2 grams, and mixed it with water. It tasted like a cold, somewhat bitter tea, and I didn't have much hope for relief. Then, I gradually found myself unaware of the pain. For the first time, it seemed to naturally dissipate, as though the scoliosis and resulting disruption of my cervical spine were mere afterthoughts; distant memories rather than constant reminders. I did not feel high as some may suggest. Nor did I feel euphoric. I simply felt well enough to resume the activities of daily living that I had previously felt unable to do.

There are questions about whether sudden termination of kratom use will result in withdrawal symptoms. I can attest to the fact that I did not personally experience these symptoms. As with any substance (or in this case natural supplement), a person will typically revert back to how he or she felt prior to having taken it. So do I feel unwell when I do not take kratom? Yes I do. But that is because I felt unwell for YEARS before discovering it. Recently, my anxiety has resurfaced in the form of kratom regulation in the United States. I must ask- what is the purpose of this? Is it easier to force people to take potentially damaging substances which have become increasingly difficult to obtain medically? Should we take kratom away from those who benefit for fear that a small percentage of individuals-already predisposed to addictive tendencies- may abuse it? The same argument could be said for alcohol or even cough syrup, but we still offer people the opportunity to demonstrate personal responsibility through safe use in moderation.

Since I began taking kratom, I have resumed my degree (which I abandoned a decade ago). I am four courses away from receiving my Baccalaureate degree with honors. My hopes are to continue my path to wellness, and someday be less reliant on others to exist. I urge you to consider my story. I am a truth-seeker, with no immediate gain by writing this. Everybody deserves a quality of life, and kratom has been such an invaluable asset to so many people in our country. Thank you for your time. I strongly appreciate your consideration of this matter.

(b) (6)

Responsible kratom consumer

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 5:14:07 AM

Kratom is a tropical plant in the coffee family from Southeast Asia that has been used to support energy and focus, as well as a potent immune system booster. Kratom is inherently safe and shares many therapeutic constituents in common with other widely recognized medicinal plants such as Cat's Claw and Yohimbe, which currently enjoy wide spread and safe usage as dietary supplements in the United States and abroad.

The DEA proposed adding Kratom to Schedule I without a serious review of the available scientific literature. A simple Google search for "Mitragyna speciosa" will find over 1,660 search results documenting the potential medical value of Kratom. Yet, rather than taking the time to analyze accepted research and anecdotal evidence of Kratom's benefits, the FDA holds the view that the supplement has no meaningful medical benefits.

Most galling of all, the FDA is taking this drastic step without allowing for input and comment from people like me. There are millions of people in America who use Kratom for pain relief and other legitimate health issues. Yet, FDA is denying us even the opportunity to tell our stories.

In light of the above, I am asking that you contact the and the Office of Management and Budget. Please allow the millions of regular Americans who use Kratom to comment on the proposed prohibition. I take kratom for chronic pain and I am 63 years old. I take kratom every day and it alleviates the pain I used to have every day. I was taking opioid pain meds for the pain but after a while it stopped working and I became dependant on the medication! I no longer take pain meds thanks to this God-given all natural herbal plant! Please do not let the DEA take control over our lives because by banning this plant, the end result will be thousands of kratom users going back on horrendous opioid pain meds. Thank you for your time,

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Consumption
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:26:25 PM

To whom it concerns,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a responsible, law abiding adult who uses Kratom for energy and overall well being. My husband and I both have been taking it for these reasons for a few years; we have experienced no adverse effects, including withdraws when we do not have it available. I am a special education teacher and he is a physical therapist assistant and we are able to work daily and fulfill our work duties, we have never been disciplined for our work performance as you would see with an addict or a person who comes to work under the influence. I urge you to keep it legal and available to adults and possibly just enforce extra safety precautions, such as only available through reputable vendors, safety/legal disclaimers etc. as you would see on St. John's Wort, Kava Kava and other natural botanicals.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Discussion
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 1:43:50 PM
Attachments: [Letter USDA Commissioner Gottlieb.docx](#)

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002
CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

Good day Commissioner,

I am writing today in regards to your intent to place Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine aka Kratom, into Schedule I. I do understand the need to control substances as there are segments of our populous who will abuse. I am not one of them nor do I support their desire to "get high." People will abuse if it's in their nature and we cannot stop them if their intent is to harm themselves, call it natural consequences when they choose to harm themselves.

I am a 55-year-old grandmother of six. I have a desk job working for the (b) (6) Medicaid Program. I do not perform work that places demand on my body. I have had too many injuries and surgeries over my lifetime that wouldn't allow that anyway. I spent 12 years in the nursing field as a Certified Nursing Assistant and recently had a not-at-fault collision where my GMC Suburban was totaled. Do you know how hard it is to total a (b) (6) GMC (b) (6) 4x4 Suburban? This accident alone resulted in two surgeries for my injuries.

I like so many others have discovered Kratom to be a legitimate source of pain relief. I recently ended my contract with a local pain manager, a Physician's Assistant at a clinic in Coos Bay, OR. After a period of almost a year, I didn't want to continue with the Opiate therapy I was on. I had already exhausted the physical therapy, so I was prescribed Norco 5/325 (hydrocodone bitartrate and acetaminophen), 1 tablet every six hours for pain. That's 120 tablets in a 30 day period. That's a lot of Norco that also describes my pain level. That's a lot of pain.

Among my diagnoses, the ones that give me daily pains are:

- Spondylosis with myelopathy or radiculopathy, cervical region. I have already had the surgical option to repair this and it will not progress further (the damage) but there is damage that remains and will never regenerate to a point of no pain.
- Thoracic back pain. Due to 12 years in the nursing field.
- Three surgeries on bilateral shoulders. The left shoulder is going to be replaced soon, the surgeon has guaranteed that.
- Additionally, in all I have had 16 separate surgeries over my lifetime, nothing chronic, just life.

Please, I am pleading to you, please keep Kratom available to the communities of our country. Do what you must to monitor, but this is truly a safe alternative to the narcotics prescribed to us by our

medical experts. I love my doctors for treating me to the best of their abilities and thank my country for all the exceptional levels of care available to me, but I need Kratom. With Kratom I am in NO danger of an accidental overdose. I am in no additional danger of other health problems arising out of using narcotics. I am terrified of using narcotics because of the danger they hold, to my physical health, my mental and emotional health.

I work in the medical industry and I know the opiate abuses that are plaguing our communities. Kratom is not the enemy here. Opiates are. This is not an opiate.
Thank you for your time to read my story.
Sincerest regards,

(b) (6)

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002
CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

Good day Commissioner,

I am writing today in regards to your intent to place Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine aka Kratom, into Schedule I. I do understand the need to control substances as there are segments of our populous who will abuse. I am not one of them nor do I support their desire to "get high." People will abuse if it's in their nature and we cannot stop them if their intent is to harm themselves, call it natural consequences when they choose to harm themselves.

I am a 55-year-old grandmother of six. I have a desk job working for the (b) (6) Medicaid Program. I do not preform work that places demand on my body. I have had too many injuries and surgeries over my lifetime that wouldn't allow that anyway. I spent 12 years in the nursing field as a Certified Nursing Assistant and recently had a not-at-fault collision where my GMC Suburban was totaled. Do you know how hard it is to total a 1997 GMC (b) (6) 4x4 Suburban? This accident alone resulted in two surgeries for my injuries.

I like so many others have discovered Kratom to be a legitimate source of pain relief. I recently ended my contract with a local pain manager, a Physician's Assistant at a clinic in Coos Bay, OR. After a period of almost a year, I didn't want to continue with the Opiate therapy I was on. I had already exhausted the physical therapy, so I was prescribed Norco 5/325 (hydrocodone bitartrate and acetaminophen), 1 tablet every six hours for pain. That's 120 tablets in a 30 day period. That's a lot of Norco that also describes my pain level. That's a lot of pain.

Among my diagnoses, the ones that give me daily pains are:

- Spondylosis with myelopathy or radiculopathy, cervical region. I have already had the surgical option to repair this and it will not progress further (the damage) but there is damage that remains and will never regenerate to a point of no pain.
- Thoracic back pain. Due to 12 years in the nursing field.
- Three surgeries on bilateral shoulders. The left shoulder is going to be replaced soon, the surgeon has guaranteed that.
- Additionally, in all I have had 16 separate surgeries over my lifetime, nothing chronic, just life.

Please, I am pleading to you, please keep Kratom available to the communities of our country. Do what you must to monitor, but this is truly a safe alternative to the narcotics prescribed to us by our medical experts. I love my doctors for treating me to the best of their abilities and thank my country for all the exceptional levels of care available to me, but I need Kratom. With Kratom I am in NO danger of an accidental overdose. I am in no additional danger of other health problems arising out of using narcotics. I am terrified of using narcotics because of the danger they hold, to my physical health, my mental and emotional health.

I work in the medical industry and I know the opiate abuses that are plaguing our communities. Kratom is not the enemy here. Opiates are. This is not an opiate.

Thank you for your time to read my story.
Sincerest regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom evaluation
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 1:21:20 PM

FDA Commissioner:

My name is (b) (6). I am a 64 year old, retired electronic engineer from (b) (6). I would like to inform you that I support our ability to purchase and freely use Kratom.

I have been using it daily for the last 3 years as means for managing my insomnia and general well being. I find it both effective and safe at low cost. It has completely suppressed my desire for opiates, which began after a number of shoulder surgeries 6 years ago.

As far as I can tell Kratom has been used safely for thousands of years and is safe from overdose concerns. The science has also confirmed this finding.

The most amazing thing about it, is that it is self limiting. There is no significant desire to increase my daily dosage of 2-3 grams. Taking more than that seems to be less effective than than the just right amount. This is very much not like opiates.

I sincerely request you to follow the science here and allow Kratom free of federal drug regulation.

Sincerely, (b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM HAS BEEN PROVEN TO HELP CHRONIC PAIN WITHOUT NARCOTICS
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:08:07 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

Inline image 1





Education Images | UIG | Getty Images

Researchers are working with three compounds that appear to be the most promising when it comes to reversing the recent rise in opioid addiction and overdose death.

\$\$\$

Pennsylvania-based pharmaceutical company Trevena's oliceridine has been given preferential regulatory treatment by the FDA; mitragynine pseudoindoxyl, a compound derived from leaves of the Southeast Asian kratom plant, has shown less incidence of addiction in mice trials; and early testing of compound PZM21 has produced results researchers claim are unlike anything they've seen from potential painkiller compounds.

Today's Mortgage Rate



Back



Forward



Home



Bookmarks



34
Tabs

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom has helped both my son and I.
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 7:24:02 PM

To whom it may concern:

I have recently learned of plans to ban kratom. I am hoping this does not happen and want to voice my concern that misinformation is being spread about kratom.

I am a 38 year old married mother of three. I suffer from chronic pain and have been successfully relieving it with kratom for less than a year. Kratom relieves my pain without the risk of respiratory depression which kills so many opiate users. I am now able to exercise regularly, and can sleep at night without pain keeping me awake.

My 21 year old son has Tourette's syndrome and severe anxiety which often accompanies TS. Since using kratom, his anxiety has improved tremendously. He used to get so anxious he would vomit at work when being around too many people. He barely had any moments when anxiety did not rob him of his peace. Now, since using kratom, he can confidently work with people at his job. I do not worry about his ability to keep his job. When not at work, he can actually relax and enjoy himself.

Please do not take this helpful botanical away from my family.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom in the Emergency Department
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 1:20:49 PM

Dear Commissioner,

I am a board-certified emergency physician in (b) (6). Prior to this, I practiced at multiple locations in (b) (6). Last week, I read the "FDA Alert" regarding kratom published in the periodic update by my professional organization, the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and have felt compelled to respond. I have had prior positive experiences with kratom in many of my professional and personal encounters, and have been aware of its uses for some time. The following represents my opinions and observations about this situation, and is in no way reflective of those of my colleagues or my professional organizations.

I believe emergency physicians generally have a good handle on current substances of concern. Over the years, I have taken care of numerous patients under the influence of bathsalts, spice, prescription drugs, and every other substance imaginable. On the other hand, in 7 years of practice, I have yet to see a single patient who presented to the ED because of, or as a result of kratom use. It is my belief, that if you were to speak with other emergency physicians, their experiences would mirror my own.

Conversely, I have met quite a few patients who claim kratom has been of significant help to them--whether that be in helping with chronically painful conditions, or to help them abstain from dangerous illicit substances.

Emerging toxicology threats in the world of emergency medicine right now include heroin laced with fentanyl and counterfeit Xanax adulterated with fentanyl or Etizolam, among others. If you, or any members of the FDA, were to attend any of the national emergency medicine conferences, or listen to the monthly clinical toxicology podcasts, you would hear of a wide-variety of clinical toxidromes secondary to misuse of pharmaceuticals, illicit narcotics, and emerging novel substances of concern. Notably absent, would be the raw plant matter known as kratom.

This past week, I was surprised to open my email from ACEP and be greeted by an "FDA Alert" regarding kratom. Ironically, in spite of the FDA's claim that kratom is a significant and increasing public health danger, I would surmise most of my colleagues who read the article had never previously heard of kratom--those in my practice group certainly had not. This is not a new or novel substance, but rather, an ancient tea leaf that has somehow escaped the notice of the emergency medicine community for all of these years? Reality at the point-of-care and the "Alert" issued by the FDA are dissonant, and it is my current opinion that the claims put forth by the FDA have been heretofore unsubstantiated by the day-to-day observations of the medical community.

During my readings this week, I did notice the claim of 36 deaths involving kratom. It will suffice to say, that these are all certainly co-ingestions, as kratom alone does not produce the characteristic deadly respiratory depression classic opiates. While each death attributable to toxic ingestion is always regrettable, those reported 36 deceased individuals with kratom mentioned in the toxicology reports are unlikely of any statistical significance. Ultimately,

independent scientific researchers should have the ultimate say on this matter.

The FDA has also cited an increasing volume of poison center calls during which kratom is mentioned. My supposition is that there are two primary factors accounting for this:

(1) Emergency providers learn of kratom use (which certainly is increasing in the population) during the process of performing a complete history and physical. They then pass it along to the poison centers when making a routine call for guidance. Such calls are customary in the management of a polysubstance ingestion patient. Furthermore, many practitioners are wholly unfamiliar with kratom, and, as a result, are more likely to ask for education from the on-call toxicologists.

(2) Due to the current opiod epidemic, patients are seeking refuge where they can, and for some patients, kratom provides them with some solace. Anytime a substance becomes more widely used, this will certainly increase the incidence of it appearing on the radar of health professionals--correlation, however, is not causation. To establish causation requires methodical and prolonged study, and I do not believe the scientific community has reached this juncture yet.

We have arrived at a unique point in our history where opioids are killing people in unprecedented numbers. Opioid dependence is a certainly a very real and continual problem in our emergency departments nationwide. The opioid epidemic is a literal drain on the financial and spiritual well-being of both the medical system and the individual. Each shift in the ED is a daily reminder of the depth of the opiate crisis, and I suspect we will be dealing with the fallout for the next decade.

At a time when additional solutions to combat hard opioid use are in great demand, it was very disheartening to read the FDA press release. While not FDA-approved and not a "drug," empirical evidence seems to suggest kratom can provide desired relief and a sense of well-being to people from all walks of life. There are wide swaths of the opiate-using population do not have the means or access to employ such alternatives as Suboxone and methadone. I have no doubt that if the United States Government, at the behest of the the FDA, bans kratom, this will directly lead to increased opioid-related deaths and increased healthcare costs. I will no-doubt be seeing that wreckage first hand in my department.

In closing, kratom is an unregulated and widely used herb. As a professional licensed in the United States, I cannot officially speak to its safety, or lack thereof. While issue absolutely requires more study, current empirical evidence seems to suggest that kratom does not yield significant impairment, does not easily (if ever) produce fatal overdose in isolation, and is felt to be effective by many users. While there always risks and benefits to the use of any substance, my personal experience as an emergency physician suggests kratom is relatively safe and that it is helping keep people from using stronger opioids. It is my belief that a ban of this substance will create more pain and suffering in this time of mass-incarceration, record opioid overdoses, and mounting opioid-related healthcare costs.

Let us look toward policies based upon harm-reduction. As a scientific and medical community, we need to take long look at this issue, and ultimately do what is best for our fellow human beings--many of whom are suffering in the midst of this opioid crisis, many of whom find some degree of relief from kratom.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom is a safe dietary supplement
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 11:47:36 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 38-year old Wife, Mother, and Payroll Accountant from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This campaign puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. This campaign also seeks to prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective alternative to pain medication that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have been diagnosed with Chronic Migraine Condition, Chronic Headache/Cluster Headache Condition, Disc Degeneration, Early Onset Arthritis, and Fibromyalgia. These conditions affect every single aspect of my life and well-being. I have been under the care of a physician or pain management center for over 10 years and during that time I have taken a whole range of prescribed medications - from opioid pain medication to muscle relaxers to non-opioid pain medications, including alternative-use medications for headaches. I have suffered the entire range of negative side effects from all of those medications including sensation of possible overdose (which is terrifying), physical ailment (worsening of original condition, nausea, digestive disorders, etc.) all the way to significant hair loss!! At the same time, I was paying absolutely exorbitant prices just to have my medication prescriptions filled. As you can tell, none of these medications could grant me any measure of quality of life as each was ultimately eliminated due to the significant side effects I suffered. I struggled daily to get up in the morning, to care for myself and my children, and was at a strong risk of losing my employment due to the overwhelming pain I was in every day.

I have never found a sustainable method to control the routine, pervasive chronic pain until recently. Through shared experiences in several Chronic Pain Support Groups I was introduced to the dietary supplement Kratom. After I completed my own research on the plant, I discovered that it could possibly add significant quality of life. I began taking the natural supplement after searching for and finding reputable vendors who test and package their products safely to ensure the health and well-being of their customers. The impact on my life has been incredible. I am able to function every day with none of the side effects I have experienced in the past, I can get out of bed in the mornings - both physically and mentally. I can support my husband and care for my children. And I have begun to earn back the respect and hopefully job security that I desperately needed from my employer.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own, given my history of pharmaceutical medication side-effect problems. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

I support the FDA's work to regulate consumer products for purity and labeling, to ensure public safety by requiring vendors to sell legitimate products that have been safely packaged. I believe this is how the FDA can most help the American People, not by restricting the access of free people to a safe dietary supplement.

Thank you for your time and service to the state. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikankratom.org/>

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom is not deadly, it is a tool for self health
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 7:44:14 PM

My name is (b) (6) ; I am a 30 year old mother of 2 boys from (b) (6)
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. After injuring myself as an EMT, I did the pain clinic tour from the patient side as I am what you call a zebra in the medical community (Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS)). 5 years ago and after three surgeries I found this member of the coffee family. I was suddenly cut off of opiate pain medication (prescribed), and found myself in excruciating pain. The opiates, while never actually got rid of the pain, made me not care what hurt (not a fun life to live when I can't remember half my kid's early milestones as a result). Going back to completely unmanaged pain, I couldn't get off the couch.
By internet search I heard of this herb, and found at the time it was available locally. Fast forward five years I have had a total of ten surgeries in nine years (seven of which were on my right knee and back). Not only do I use Kratom but several other herbs such as CBD oil, California poppy, and bone broth. My doctors are skeptical of the success of pain management with herbs have seen me go from a pain zombie to a productive member of society. Never once have I had effects worse than a slightly upset stomach when I took too much.
This plant is far from a risk to society, it is a useful tool. To get effects from Kratom you have to listen to your body. This puts the individualism back in healthcare. For the first time I feel like I am in control of my health.

Sincerely
(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Legality
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 10:47:19 PM

Dear DEA,

I noticed in your recent statement that you were calling upon kratom users to reach out to the FDA for comment. Please take a moment to read this letter.

I must admit that I am very concerned about your recent statement on the FDA's position towards kratom. Please do not take this the wrong way, but what you list as "anecdotal evidence" to me is genuine testimony from people who have been helped by the plant. What seems anecdotal is making the assumption that kratom caused the deaths of a handful of individuals who had a cocktail of substances in their system, and using kratom as the scapegoat. Any person who has "overdosed" on kratom simply throws it up. Within the kratom community, this is all common knowledge. I can assure you that if this plant did in fact lead to death, the community simply would not exist,

What I am trying to say is that correlation does not equal causation.

I firmly believe that kratom saves lives every day, helping those who find themselves within the throws of the opiate crisis. Most people who use it, including myself, were once users of hardcore opiates such as oxycodone, suboxone, methadone, or even heroin. People use kratom as a method of getting off of hardcore opiates such as heroin, not vice versa.

Many of these people now have lives again, no longer driving every morning to the methadone clinic in their local city. Since getting my life back together (with the help of kratom), I've returned to university. At age 27, I am currently earning my masters degree in communications. While kratom is not entirely to thank for this achievement, it certainly helped to eliminate the temptation to abuse hardcore opiates or alcohol, a giant blockade in my teens and early twenty's.

I am asking you to please reconsider your position towards kratom, and open up your eyes and ears to individuals like myself who have been genuinely helped by this plant. While I personally am not a doctor, I am sure any researcher will tell you that kratom is far milder than any FDA approved opiate. Its not as though this plant is wreaking havoc upon our society like heroin. If any legislation is to be passed on the federal level, I would suggest prohibiting its sale to those under 21. Being an FDA worker, I am sure you know the thousands of deaths attributed to alcohol every year. Comparing these statistics with the handful of kratom incidents, it seems illogical that alcohol would continue to be legal while kratom is outlawed. Our nations history proves that outlawing substances does not solve the problem.

I fear that making kratom a schedule 1 substance will lead many kratom users to opiates which are known to destroy lives, such as oxycontin. Again, kratom does not destroy lives, but rather it helps those who are struggling. In closing, I firmly believe that outlawing kratom will make the opiate crisis **significantly worse**.

Feel free to email me anytime if you would like to speak further.

Thank you kindly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom legality
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:29:50 PM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 36 year old disabled woman from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I am housebound and mostly bedbound due to illness. I am immunocompromised and battling 9 systemic infections and have CFS. Kratom gives me a quality of life.

I found Kratom while desperately seeking pain control in 2014. At the time I could not walk, I was 95lbs, and had no insurance. I began taking Kratom for pain that was so intense it landed me in the hospital for 6 days.

Before kratom, I was prescribed many drugs for pain and anxiety. I took these drugs for several months but the side effects were intense. I began to have rebound pain from the opiates and had to wean off. I used kratom to get through the physical withdrawal and I have been using Kratom to control my pain ever since.

What a ban would mean for me is the end of life as I know it. I am afraid of how much I will regress without the herb that has carried me through my darkest days. I am afraid to go back on prescription medications and experience side effects that render me completely disabled and zombie-like. I deserve a quality of life. I am not hurting anyone with my use of Kratom, least of all myself. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Regulations
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:50:27 PM

Hello, My name is (b) (6). My # is (b) (6)

I have fibromyalgia & hypothyroidism, which equals constant inflammation, fatigue & pain.

I use Kratom responsibly, as needed, and it is the ONLY effective treatment for a sever pain flare-up. I urge you to reconsider any new regulations on this amazing natural remedy that has been used safely for centuries.

Thank you.

--

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saved my family
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:43:05 AM

My name is (b) (6) I'm 39 years old and am the father of two beautiful young ladies and the husband of one. Over the last 7 years I've had 3 back surgeries and countless other procedures. After it being determined that I would have to learn to "live with some pain" I was turned over to a pain management doctor. After years of very strong prescribed drugs I was in very bad health and my family's life had been changed and not for the good. After much research and many different all natural products I tried kratom. The last 3 years of taking kratom I'm completely free of any and all other pain meds. My health has improved much to the satisfaction of my family and doctor. Kratom has saved me I no longer have all the bad side effects and no more being high all day and night. Kratom is not a narcotic it is a all natural leaf that has allowed me to stop my 200mg of Mscontin every day. I'm not completely without pain but I Beg you sir to consider all the problems with drug over doses and chronic pain that you would please allow more time for research. This leaf has saved my life.

Blessings (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM SAVED MY LIFE!
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 3:32:12 PM

Please do the right thing here! The pharmaceutical companies make enough money! I was on suboxone for 2 years, it was hell to get off of it. I couldn't do it. With kratom I was able to completely stop that HORRIBLE drug. A sensical world does not exist if kratom is illegal and alcohol is not. I've been sober for 6 years, I'm doing great things!! Please don't put me at risk to fight that fight again.

My dad died at 44 years old, he drank a 2 liter of coke a day. But kratom should be illegal?! You all need to get your shit together!! You can't see what is happening in this country can you?? Help yourselves, people aren't buying the bullshit anymore!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saves lives. You will read all of me 30 times. This is inescapable.
Date: Sunday, December 03, 2017 9:58:12 PM

Disclaimer: Kratom isn't intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. You really do have A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to read the Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study on kratom and the Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD 8 factor scientific study on kratom. They both came to the conclusion that kratom is exceptionally safe for any substance broadly used by millions of people worldwide, that kratom is well within the safety range for dietary supplements, and that kratom is good and beneficial for society. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is one of the world's best experts on addiction and abuse liability. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is also A master scientist at studying kratom. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is A true master for using science in the service of humanity and public health policy. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "kratom consumers are concerned because some of them use kratom as A natural alternative to opioids and opiates, and they know what people like me who study opioid and opiate addiction know. That if you cut off the life line that is keeping somebody off opioids and opiates. A lot of people will go back to opioids and opiates. Some of these good people will die because of their opioid, or opiate use. That is reality." I know A person named Ross Kolde that used to be homeless, unemployed, and A heroin addict. He told me that he believes that if you ban kratom in A way that makes it impossible for him to get kratom. He will go back to heroin and that is A death sentence for him. That is what he told me. He has A good job, A home, A girlfriend, and he has stopped using heroin completely. I believe Ross kolde's life will go back to the way it used to be as A heroin addict if he is denied kratom that really helps him manage his health and well-being as A responsible adult kratom consumer. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD said it best, "We do not have A public health crisis with kratom. If we ban kratom we will create A public health crisis that is deadly serious. Most of my work at Pinney Associates and throughout my career has been in service of public health policy through science. I work with products like kratom that serve people. Based on the science the public health impact, and the context of America's opioid and opiate crisis. I conclude that keeping kratom available to people is in our nation's public health interest." As A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has improved my health, well-being, and quality of life tremendously with kratom. I agree with Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD 100% in the most super extremely powerful way. I swear this is the ultimate master miraculous truth superior to anything else out of. all that is with my hand on the Holy Bible. Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Should NOT be banned
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 4:27:42 PM

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 44-year old female from (b) (6).
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I suffer from chronic pain and fatigue from having Multiple Sclerosis. I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in Oct 2001.

A friend of my husbands uses Kratom for his chronic back pain and gave me some to try to see if it would help with my pain. To my surprise it did help. I've been taking various strains of Kratom over the last three years. It has enabled me to cut back on taking opioids mainly Viacodin.

Viacodin nor Kratom cures my pain 100%. Taking Kratom before my children get off the school bus gives me 2-3 hours of improvement of pain and fatigue so I can spend some time with the kids.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom should not be banned
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 4:24:54 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 44-year old female from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I suffer from chronic pain and fatigue from having Multiple Sclerosis. I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in Oct 2001.

A friend of my husbands uses Kratom for his chronic back pain and gave me some to try to see if it would help with my pain. To my surprise it did help. I've been taking various strains of Kratom over the last three years. It has enabled me to cut back on taking opioids mainly Viacodin.

Viacodin nor Kratom cures my pain 100%. Taking Kratom before my children get off the school bus gives me 2-3 hours of improvement of pain and fatigue so I can spend some time with the kids.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Kratom Story - (b) (6)
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:52:03 PM
Importance: High

Hello, my name is (b) (6), I'm a 29 year old college student at (b) (6) school of engineering. It is important for me to voice my full support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and the blatant smear campaign to take Kratom out of the hands of responsible adults in the USA. Kratom, a plant that helps millions of people suffering from various types of chronic illnesses and acute mental conditions is trying to be taken away from the people who need it. This WILL cause an opiate epidemic problem and place more tax paying citizens in legal trouble and possibly jail. Even more concerning is that it will prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdoses.

I came to use kratom after years of struggling with Tourette's Syndrome and Agoraphobia. This plant has lead me down a road of being free from dangerous prescription medicines that are known to cause extreme addiction and withdrawal upon abrupt stoppage (SSRI's and benzodiazepines). With this being said, I would want nothing more than to continue living my life free of pain, anxiety, and dangerous prescription medications.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has personally changed my life and millions of other's lives. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have any questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/> or <https://www.botanical-education.org/>.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom, your press statement about it was untrue, reconsider your kratom madness campaign
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 5:18:38 PM

We are all watching what you are doing, and you will be held to account for your fact free anti-kratom campaign.

There are no deaths from kratom, all the people you cited had other problems and drugs in their system, we've doctors and studies that show you are wrong.

Please reconsider your outrageous statements about kratom. It is a safe plant without any serious side effects, and it shouldn't be regulated like a drug, as it's a plant. By the way there are companies with the patent on the drugs in kratom, directly contradicting your statement in your press release.

Pleasing your big pharma buddies won't help you stay commissioner when you lie and harm a million people with your regulatory abuse.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 3:11:44 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6) I am a 24 year old male Veteran of the Armed Services. I use Kratom a few times a week before workouts and tests. I was diagnosed at a young age with ADHD. This substance helps me focus far better than doctor prescribed Adderall with absolutely no side effects. I also experience joint pain due to 5 years of harsh conditions in the US military. This substance helps reduce the pain i am in allowing me to work out effectively in order to stay healthy. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this drug. I have only experienced benefits to my life. I ask that this drug be left legal as it does not endanger nor cause dependency issues.

Thank you for you time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom: A Perspective from the Emergency Department**
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 9:26:02 PM

****Unfortunately a rough-draft of this letter was submitted by accident earlier today--my apologies for this****

November 29th, 2017

Dear Commissioner,

I am a board-certified emergency physician in (b) (6). Prior to this, I practiced at multiple locations in (b) (6). Last week, I read the "FDA Alert" regarding kratom published in the periodic online publication by my professional organization, the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), and have since felt compelled to respond. I have had prior positive experiences with kratom in many of my professional and personal encounters, and have been aware of its use in the pain management and opiate recovery communities for some time. The following represents my opinions and observations about this situation, and is in no way reflective of those of my colleagues or my professional organizations.

I believe emergency physicians generally have a good handle on current substances of concern. Over the years, I have taken care of numerous patients under the influence of bathsalts, spice, prescription drugs, and every other substance imaginable. On the other hand, in 7 years of practice, I have yet to see a single patient who presented to the ED because of, or as a result of, kratom use. It is my belief, that if you were to speak with other emergency physicians, their experiences would mirror my own.

Conversely, I have met quite a few patients who claim kratom has been of significant help to them--whether that be in helping with chronically painful conditions, or to help them abstain from dangerous illicit substances.

Emerging toxicology threats in the world of emergency medicine right now include heroin laced with fentanyl and counterfeit Xanax adulterated with fentanyl or Etizolam, among others. If you, or any members of the FDA, were to attend any of the national emergency medicine conferences, or listen to the monthly clinical toxicology podcasts, you would hear of a wide-variety of clinical toxidromes secondary to misuse of pharmaceuticals, illicit narcotics, and emerging novel substances of concern. Notably absent, would be the raw plant matter known as kratom.

This past week, I was surprised to open my email from ACEP and be greeted by an "FDA Alert" regarding kratom. Ironically, in spite of the FDA's claim that kratom is a significant and increasing public health danger, I would surmise most of my colleagues who read the article had never previously heard of kratom--those in my practice group certainly had not. This is not a new or novel substance, but rather, an ancient tea-like leaf. I find it unlikely that this allegedly dangerous substance has somehow escaped the notice of the emergency medicine and clinical toxicology communities for all of these years. Reality at the point-of-care and the "Alert" issued by the FDA are dissonant, and it is my current opinion that the claims put forth by the FDA have been heretofore unsubstantiated by the day-to-day observations of the front line providers in medical community.

During my readings this week, I did notice the claim of 36 deaths involving kratom. It will suffice to say, that these are all certainly co-ingestions, as kratom alone does not produce the characteristic deadly respiratory depression of classic opiates. While each death attributable to a toxic ingestion is regrettable, those reported 36 deceased individuals with kratom mentioned in the toxicology reports are unlikely of any statistical significance. Ultimately, independent scientific researchers should have the ultimate say on this matter.

The FDA has also cited an increasing volume of poison center calls during which kratom is mentioned. My supposition is that there are two primary factors accounting for this:

(1) Emergency providers learn of kratom use (which certainly is increasing in the population) during the process of performing a complete history and physical. In turn, they then pass it along to the poison centers when making a routine call for guidance. Such calls to the poison center are customary in the management of a polysubstance ingestion patient.

Furthermore, many practitioners are wholly unfamiliar with kratom, and, as a result, are more likely to ask for education from the on-call toxicologists.

(2) Due to the current opioid epidemic, patients are seeking refuge where they can, and for some patients, kratom provides them with some solace. Anytime a substance becomes more widely-used, it will certainly increase the incidence of it appearing on the radar of health professionals--correlation, however, is not necessarily causation. To establish causation requires methodical and prolonged study, and I do not believe the scientific community has reached this juncture yet with respect to kratom.

We have arrived at a unique point in our history where opioids are killing people in unprecedented numbers. Opioid dependence is a certainly a very real and continual problem in our emergency departments nationwide. The opioid epidemic is a literal drain on the financial and spiritual well-being of both the medical system and the individual. Each shift in the ED is a daily reminder of the depth of the opioid crisis, and I suspect we will be dealing with the fallout for the next decade.

At a time when additional solutions to combat hard opioid use are in great demand, it was very disheartening to read the FDA press release. While not FDA-approved and not a "drug," empirical evidence seems to suggest kratom can provide desired relief and a sense of well-being to people from all walks of life. There are wide swaths of the opiate-using population do not have the means or access to employ such alternatives as Suboxone and methadone. I have no doubt that if the United States Government, at the behest of the the FDA, bans kratom, this will directly lead to increased opioid-related deaths and increased healthcare costs. I will no-doubt be seeing that wreckage first hand in my department.

In closing, kratom is an unregulated and widely used herb. As a professional licensed in the United States, I cannot officially speak to its safety, or lack thereof. While this issue absolutely requires more study, current empirical evidence seems to suggest that kratom does not yield significant impairment, does not easily (if ever) produce fatal overdose in isolation, and is felt to be effective by many users. While there always risks and benefits to the use of any substance, my personal experience as an emergency physician suggests kratom is relatively safe, and that it is helping keep people from using stronger opioids. It is my belief that a ban of this substance will create more pain and suffering in this time of mass-incarceration, record opioid overdoses, and mounting opioid-related healthcare costs.

Let us look toward policies based upon harm-reduction. As a scientific and medical community, we need to take long look at this issue, and ultimately do what is best for our fellow human beings--many of whom are suffering in the midst of this crisis; many of whom find some degree of relief from kratom.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

(b) (6)

Unfortunately a rough-draft of this letter was submitted by accident earlier today--my apologies for this

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom's legal status
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 3:18:43 PM

"I am a responsible senior citizen who uses Kratom to for my health and well-being. I want to ask you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits."

Thank you in advance for your time.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 11:19:11 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public. My name is (b) (6) I'm a 48-year old Mom from (b) (6) .
I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I had shoulder surgery and was on opioids for 15 years, I started taking Kratom instead because I didn't want to be on opioids the rest of my life...I was scared of the withdrawal symptoms, I was amazed at the seamless transition to get off years and years of these pills! They also help me work as a hairstylist without any side effects that I got from opioids; constipation, pancreatitis, kidney problems and unreliable sleep patterns. Kratom was my safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/> Thank you for your time and service to the state. Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 1:00:56 PM
Attachments: [Kratom Infographic.png](#)

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 47-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

KRATOM

BY THE NUMBERS

26,000 AMERICANS

have asked President Trump to keep kratom legal.

A 2016 petition supporting kratom attracted more than

142,000 SIGNERS

from the U.S.



99.1%

OF 23,000+ COMMENTERS

to the DEA in late 2016
opposed a kratom ban.

1,175 doctors, vets,
scientists & law officers
told the DEA they
don't want a kratom ban.



**A BIPARTISAN
62 U.S. HOUSE & SENATE MEMBERS**

asked the DEA not to proceed
with a ban on kratom.



0%

OF EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE
PROFESSIONALS/EMTs

responding to an online survey
supported a ban on kratom.



Kratom consumers report that the
botanical supplement is used for
many things including

**MINOR PAIN AND TO
PROMOTE A SENSE
OF HEALTH &
WELL-BEING.**



ZERO DEATHS

have been
proven to be
caused by
kratom.



One of the world's leading experts on drug
abuse and addiction says kratom has

**NO MORE POTENTIAL FOR "SUBSTANCE
USE DISORDER" THAN CAFFEINE ...**

Chamomile, St. John's Wort, and nutmeg are dietary
supplements that are comparable to kratom in terms
of the potential for addiction. There is no basis for
classifying kratom like heroin or LSD.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 8:13:24 PM

Dear sirs

I am a 52 year old male who is a homeowner and has manged in the restaurant industry for over 20 years.

A few years ago I began to suffer from anxiety and clinical depression along with moderate back pain due to years of long hours of daily standing on my feet.

I talked to my doctor and have tried numerous antidepressants over the years with little or no success. I have even experienced suicidal thoughts on these medicines even tho I had never had them before. Very scary.

I had resigned to living a life of being chemically depressed and struggling just to get out of bed and or perform even the simplest task's at home. At one time had suffered several demotions and I even lost my job due to frequent call outs and declining performance at work.

I also have an exorbitant amount of debt because of family (brother) medical issues.

Upon discovering Kratom I was able to regain the ability to have the drive to go to work and even regained the ability to manage again. My boss had noticed a major difference in my performance. It also helped my stamina and ability to work and stand on my feet all day. I was back to performing like I used to before my depression set in.

Fast food is all that I had ever done so I was unable to find employment maintaining the amount of pay that i needed to take care of my obligations and house payments.

I FEAR that if y'all schedule Kratom as a controlled substance I will no longer be able to carry out my responsibilities and obligations to my family. I have never had any adverse reactions or bad side effects because of Kratom. It has truly been a godsend. I urge you to PLEASE reconsider your attempts to ban Kratom from being legal.

Sincerely (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My experience with Kratom
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 4:18:42 PM

Hi Commissioner Gottlieb-

My name is (b) (6) . . . I'm a successful 34 year Financial Advisor and Entrepreneur. I have a beautiful wife and 2 amazing kids ages 6 & 10.

I was prescribed tramadol years ago to manage some health issues that stem from a breaking my neck while in my youth, and now dealing with the long term affects of that. Initially, I was incredibly thankful to be taking it and getting relief. However, it wasn't long before it began having an incredibly negative affect on my health. It literally drained me nearly all of my testosterone, I went from being a healthy 28 yr old who was extremely active to one who was just trying to get out of bed in the morning. The medicine wasn't helping and I felt like I needed more just to keep from feeling even more sick. My daughter who loves art actually drew a picture of me in bed with a sad face. It broke my heart!

I'm sure these kinds of stories are all too common to hear in your position. Anyway, after trying things with doctors and just being prescribed more medicine, I finally realized that I needed to get things figured out so I began to research any possible solutions at length. This is when I found Kratom. I was naturally both very skeptical and incredibly cautious but because I was deterred to get my health back I went ahead and tried taking it.

To make a long story short, I started taking it and stopped taking the tramadol. That was about 4 years ago and I still take the same amount I did when I started. I've worked incredibly hard to get my health back and I can honestly say that Kratom played a big part in that. My business is thriving, I exercise daily and still have energy to play with my kids. I genuinely believe that banning it will do more harm than good. While I understand the concern of people taking it irresponsibly, the science clearly shows that it has nowhere near the same negative affects as opioids and doesn't cause the same type of respiratory depression that they do which is obviously the primary cause of death.

When I hear the numbers of deaths over the last 5 years that have any association with Kratom, I can't help but to think that it's incredibly insignificant in comparison to far more dangerous substances. I also understand that in these cases, Kratom has rarely if ever been the exclusive substance being used. If Kratom is banned, I'm certainly not the person that's going to get harder drugs, but I also believe many people who are suffering will at the very least turn back to pharmaceutical pain killers which we all know takes thousands and thousands of lives each year.

Thanks for taking the time to hear my story, and I hope the DEA will lean on the side of protecting the general public by keeping Kratom legal rather than allowing the pharmaceutical company to continue their stranglehold on people suffering from pain.

Thanks again,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My Story—Please Read
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 7:00:15 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 54-year-old housewife, mother, and grandmother. I worked for over 15 years for the federal government with a high security clearance and I've never done drugs.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I came to use Kratom several years ago after a botched surgery that landed me in the hospital with a deadly infection which also led to an even more life threatening blood clot. The pain was unbearable. I was unable to work, take care my children, or even do my day-to-day duties in the home. I was prescribed massive amounts of painkillers, antidepressants, and anti-anxiety medications as well as Ambien for sleep. After over 12 months of being prescribed many different narcotics all at once, I begin to recognize the signs of addiction. I was so dependent on that medication that all I could think about was what would happen if I ran out, and would I ever be desperate enough to go to the streets if I took my ex too soon! Now mind you, as I said above, I'm a 54 -year-old middle-class woman who does not do drugs or alcohol. On one of my weekly visits for blood draws, a nurse practitioner whispered in my ear that I should research Kratom! Within weeks I was off of all my pain medications and using this natural botanical leaf for my pain relief, sleep, Depression, and anxiety. I have suffered no ill affects from Kratom while there were many from all those other pharmaceuticals. I can't tell you where I would've ended up had I stayed on the path I was on, but I can tell you that I firmly believe Kratom saved my life. I have been able to live a completely revived life compared to the restricted nearly bed ridden life I had on narcotics. I have never been more clear and more healthy in my life thanks to Kratom. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without Kratom!

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

--- Include your name, address and phone number.

--

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please be sensible about kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 11:42:08 AM

I am a 71-year-old retired full professor at a Land Grant university as well as a retired management consultant.

I am strongly opposed to the DEA scheduling kratom in any way. This plant (and the alkaloids it contains) should be left unscheduled. It should be available as a botanical, and the United States government should help ensure that it and other botanicals are regulated for quality and potency.

I had never heard of kratom until the DEA first threatened to schedule it in 2016. Because my daughter is disabled with a severely painful and incurable disease, I immediately began to research this plant. After reading many scientific studies and hundreds of positive (mostly glowing) anecdotal accounts, I bought some kratom for her. No pharmaceutical medication, including opioids, has significantly helped her in the 20 years she has suffered from her debilitating disease. I am stunned to report that five grams of kratom relieved her pain and bladder pressure for five hours.

In (b) (6), I had a four-hour surgery that involved multiple spinal fusions, and I was in the hospital for eight nights. I came home with fentanyl patches, which left me light-headed and dazed and which I stopped using after about a week, and tablets of oxycodone. I am thankful that the doctor provided the post-surgical pain relief that I needed. Concerned, however, about using the opioids with another CNS depressant I am prescribed, I decided to take 4 grams of kratom in the evening so that I wouldn't stop breathing at night.

Four grams of kratom controlled my pain much better than 10 mg. of oxycodone.

By attempting to schedule kratom, the FDA and DEA are acting as if nothing has been learned by the decades-long War on Drugs that has ruined the lives of millions. Making the plant illegal will not stop people from using it any more than the illegality of any number of substances has prevented people from using those drugs. We can't even prevent prisoners, people watched day and night, from using illegal drugs.

But kratom is not a drug; it is a plant that has been used for centuries to help people be more productive and to control their pain. We are a free country, and our government should not control what adults put into their own bodies, unless that action has severe social consequences, equally or more severe than alcohol.

Yes, we must try as best we can to regulate kratom's quality and purity. Yes, we must study its effects and consequences so that if it is harmful in some ways, we can treat those harms medically rather than criminally. Most importantly, we must study this plant because it could lead to breakthroughs in pain management that are far less addictive and lethal than opioids.

Outlawing kratom will make such breakthroughs almost impossible. Scheduling kratom at all will prevent tens of thousands of law-abiding American citizens from treating their pain, controlling their anxiety, enhancing their sense of well being, and weaning themselves from the scourge of opioid addiction. Scheduling this herb or its alkaloids will not stop people from

using it; it will make criminals of huge numbers of those citizens who will continue to use the plant, illegally, because they find it safer and more efficacious than anything that can be prescribed.

Yours sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: PLEASE DO NOT TAKE KRATOM FROM ME. LIFE ISN'T WORTH LIVING WITHOUT IT BECAUSE OF SO MUCH PHYSICAL PAIN THAT I ENDURE
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:05:25 PM

Dear Sir,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 58 year old wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend from (b) (6) and I just came across some disturbing news articles regarding Kratom and I wanted to send you some additional information in the hopes that you can understand the misinformation that is circulating. I implore you to take action on my behalf. I have seen a press release by the FDA regarding Kratom and I am concerned that the information now circulating is utterly untrue. Kratom leaf is NOT a drug and I believe it should be a dietary ingredient, as I consume it as a tea.

This puts Kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that are also safely easing the nation's and (b) (6) opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have never in my life consumed illegal drugs and I don't want to start now.

Kratom is a plant that grows in Southeast Asia, a relative of the coffee plant. I have been consuming Kratom for over 8 months now and I do not have any adverse effects. I did not begin taking it to curb any opiate related issues. I have never had a drug problem legal or illegal. Kratom has many benefits and is not exclusive to addicts and honestly I'm tired of seeing that be reported because you'll only attract addicts to Kratom. Addicts will find out it's not something they can get high on and either will go back to their opiates or get clean with the help of Kratom. Kratom does not give me any feeling of "high" or "euphoria". I have been prescribed opiates in the past and I have felt negative side effects from those drugs. Kratom does not give me those adverse feelings.

Kratom CAN NOT get someone high; it has an opioid receptor agonist and an opioid receptor inhibitor, making the body unable to consume more than a small amount. Cheese and chocolate have an opioid receptor agonist, for reference on how common this can be. I and thousands, potentially millions of Americans, are as dependent on Kratom as we are on coffee, except that if Kratom gets taken away from us many of us will die. I have been to many, many doctors and have several medical diagnoses and the answer to that was to send me to pain management. I can no longer take many of the medications that the doctors have prescribed due to ill adverse effects from those medications. Gabapentin has robbed me of my memory and I am very saddened from this.

I suffer from fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, degenerative disc disease, carpal tunnel syndrome of the right wrist and the left wrist, osteoarthritis of bilateral knees, Cervical Disk displacement, herniated cervical

discs, cervical radiculitis, Morton's neuroma, lumbar radiculopathy, degenerative disc disease of the lumbar spine, Patello-femoral syndrome, Right rotator cuff syndrome, Chondromalacia of Patella, irritable bowel syndrome, daytime narcolepsy to name some of my painful conditions and desperately needed to be available to my husband and family. Coupled with therapy with a trained professional, I have been able to get out of bed and be a contributing member to my family and community. I believe Kratom has helped me immensely; more than any prescription medication has helped me after several years of professional treatment from a numerous list of doctors and prescription medications.

I urge you to do some more research and look for the scientific data that is stacked against the negative press. I urge you to look at the evidence the American Kratom association has compiled. I have also included a link to a compilation of scientific data regarding Kratom along with press releases... this includes a 127 page 8 factor analysis independently conducted by Pinney Associates last year, discussing its extremely low potential for abuse... please take a look. I would like to add that the DEA has asked the FDA for an 8 factor analysis on Kratom at least twice and FDA has yet to produce one. Peoples lives are at stake.

https://drive.google.com/drive/mobile/folders/0B_SMhCuwVcKjZ3p0amk4ZXpmSzg

Should Kratom become banned in our state, I hope you will feel responsible for the adverse affects it will have on my body. How do you propose I get out of bed and be human without the relief I get from my Kratom tea leaf? This is a God given plant that is my right to consume to function with a semi normal daily life. I am not asking for a plant that gives a "high" or "euphoria". I am asking to keep my plant as a supplement so that I do not have to endure painful days and nights with very little sleep because of the amount of pain I endure and the condition of my health. My family needs me. You will take me away from my family if you do not save my Kratom.

Thank you for your careful and positive consideration you have given this important topic.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:51:47 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I am a proud Kratom user. I am all for making sure that is is not mixed or altered on contaminated with anything other than Kratom. Kratom is a safe and natural pain and opiate withdrawal alternative. It helps me with my alcohol use and pain, but for many it is a life saver. It has been demonized lately for whatever reason. All the stories that blame Kratom for death all involve other possible causes. It is a plant related to coffee that has literally saved thousands of lives. Please help us keep it legal. As grown adults we should have the right to put stuff in our bodies as long as it does not affect others.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please reconsider your stance on kratom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 7:52:59 PM

My name is (b) (6), I am a 35 year old from (b) (6). I would like to voice my concern and disagreement with the FDA and the recent smear campaign against the kratom tree (a cousin of the coffee tree). This puts kratom, a plant that safely and naturally helps millions of people (and has for millennia) who are suffering from chronic physical and mental conditions, on the same level as illegal drugs such as heroin. It would also prevent research which, to date, has shown kratom to be a safe and natural painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from prescription painkillers.

I have used kratom for years. My main reasons for using it are for the easing of debilitating menstrual cramps, so I can still go to work. I also use it to stop the dangerous panic attacks I used to have at least monthly (sometimes while driving). Since using kratom I have only had one panic attack, immediately after the death of a family member. After using kratom, I can see why many people who are trying to get off opiates find it helpful, because it eases the pain and anxiety of withdrawals. With the national crises we are dealing with opiate overdose deaths, I fear that banning this herb will definitely lead to deaths from people forced to use opiates, and suicides from people with chronic pain with no other choices but to use opiates to try to cope with their pain.

Kratom helps me go to work when I am in debilitating pain. It helps me be a more productive member of society. The best part of all is it makes me more functional, not at all like an illicit substance in the schedule 1 category would. I know the quality of my life would be greatly changed as I would be having almost monthly panic attacks (making me dangerous on the road), and debilitating menstrual cramps keeping me from going to work.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: please reconsider your thoughts on kratom!!
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:12:59 PM

Hi im a kratom user for pain and I used to have to take pain pills for my relief and that is not the kind of life anyone should have to live with. All I beg for is to please do not have me have to resort to pain pills that quit working so fast and are miserably addictive.

Thanks,

Please consider this!!!

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 10:59:56 AM

Please stop attacking kratom. It has helped so many people stay off of deadly drugs. There's no death ever from kratom alone. It's sad you would rather see people die from opiate od or addiction. Just to make money, you and pharmaceutical companies just gotta have your money. This is a sad piece of shit country when you try to ban something helpful and not dangerous.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Proof of kratoms benefits
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 12:14:48 PM

Hi everyone, I hope you are all having a good day. I would like to start by saying i completely understand your concern of kratom. We do have major challenges in this opiod crisis.

However kratom is not one of them. If you look at the facts it is definatley not the monster youve been mislead into thinking. Please keep this plant legal. If not for just its help in this crisis. Im not putting down your efforts but they have failed. Kratom is not the best sokution i agree. But its better than anything else at the moment and most certainly safer than your three main drugs of choice.

I am a 32 year old female and mother of two. I was diagnosed last year with cirrhosis of the liver. I had gone into liver failer but pulled through. It was very rough for a while. I was very sick physically and mentally. I was having paracentisis monthly,so many meds. I just wanted it to end. I decided to research online safer alternatives to help me with pain and anguish naturally. I read into alot of different little studies and concluded it is safe enough to try with close monitoring on my and my doctors part mind you. It was like a miracle. The pain subsided, I was actually able to eat(gained 20lbs. Now 100lbs-no ascites) I just felt a weight lifted off my shoulders. I was able to participate for tbe most part in daily life. Still do. Ive been using kratom daily since early this year. I was still sceptical so i consistently monitored my test and imaging results. They have actually gotten better. Im on less meds(stopped the oxy and tramadol) and im living again. Please dont take this amazing plant away. It will only end in distaster.

Sincerlv.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Proposed Kratom Ban My Story
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 8:31:20 PM

Hello,
I am attaching a brief letter in support of Kratom.
It is also captured in this Email body.

28 November 2017

Scott Gottlieb M.D.
Commisioner
US Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Ave
Silver Springs MD 20993-0002
CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov

Dr Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 58 year-old female from (b) (6). Please help fight the FDA and their negative information being released to the public concerning the herbal supplement Kratom.

I am in total support of Kratom and am very upset about the FDA and the false negative campaign against this herb. Kratom is simply a plant. It has provided me with life-changing benefits. I discovered this herb by researching for natural remedies for pain relief so I could quit taking the opioid pain medications I have been taking for close to 20 years! I have had back surgery and unfortunately it did not fix my problem. So I was given pain killers and muscle relaxers and sleeping aids. These prescription drugs resulted in my stomach ulcerating and I almost died from bleeding ulcers due to this medication. Not to mention the damage to my liver from these prescriptions.

It got to the point that I could not function without this medication. My life was revolving around doctor visits and refill dates. At one point I was prescribed a total of 16 pills daily. I believe you will agree this is no way to live! Had I stayed on the path I was on there is no doubt in my mind that I would have lost my job and God only knows where I would have ended up.

Upon discovering this herb coupled with dietary changes and other herbs, teas, etc. I have weened myself off these prescriptions and am functioning again. I got my life back. I can actually sleep in a bed instead of a recliner! I am able to work regularly and have a much better attitude. My quality of life allows me to be a productive member of society. I know without a doubt that would not have happened without this herb; I would be forced to return

to prescription drugs. I do not want to do that. My life is good and I am much healthier than I have been the past two decades!

Please do not outlaw Kratom – it has been a miracle herb for me. I'm requesting you to visit <https://americankratom.org> and get the REAL facts on Kratom.

Thank you for your time and please do not ban this item.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6) [Commissioner FDA](#)
Cc: ODLL@usdoj.gov; ODLP@usdoj.gov
Subject: Re: Keep kratom legal! Do the right and humane thing!
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 11:16:09 AM

>For 18 months I have been serving kratom in my tea house, (b) (6) in (b) (6) in (b) (6) Several hundred people have enjoyed it there, often taking to-go packs home. Except for the rare upset stomach or light headiness, I have closely observed this plant's - it is NOT a drug but a plant - effects. For many, it serves to lift or lessen anxiety and depression while increasing sociability and enhancing concentration and productivity. For those suffering from pain, both chronic and situational, it usually offers complete and instant relief for hours, and, with daily use, allows them to lead a pain-free and opioid-free life. Those struggling with addiction to alcohol and prescription and illegal drugs, have often had success conquering their addiction, often resuming a productive life.

>

>Recently, the FDA announced they are considering scheduling the plant, citing 36 deaths in 2 years not "caused" by kratom but where kratom was one of several substances involved. They also stated it was addictive, citing no research proving this and ignoring studies that show it is only mildly habit-forming, like coffee and sugar, both of which are involved in many more than 16 deaths annually.

>

>I believe both the FDA and the DEA are considering making the plant unavailable not because of the reason's they state but rather because of this plant's safe and profound effect. The same is true for the DEA's decades-long attack on marijuana. As revealed in the recent 60 Minute/Washington Post investigation into the opioid epidemic, the DEA is mostly controlled by people with long-standing ties to the industries and the large corporations they are entrusted to police and regulate. The same is true of the FDA where its director, Scott Gottlieb, acknowledged his ties to health care and pharmaceutical firms would cause him to recuse himself for one year from any agency decisions involving about 20 health care companies he worked with.

>

>Making this rather benign but very helpful plant unavailable will condemn many to a life of pain and/or addiction while removing a safe recreational alternative to alcohol, an addictive substance causing an estimated 88,000 deaths annually, making alcohol the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States. I hope the leaders of both the FDA and the DEA will allow their service to our citizens to which they are entrusted to guide their decision-making.

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6) [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Re: Keep kratom legal! Do the right and humane thing!
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 8:35:59 AM

For 18 months I have been serving kratom in my tea house, (b) (6) in (b) (6), in (b) (6). Several hundred people have enjoyed it there, often taking to-go packs home. Except for the rare upset stomach or light headiness, I have closely observed this plant's - it is NOT a drug but a plant - effects. For many, it serves to lift or lessen anxiety and depression while increasing sociability and enhancing concentration and productivity. For those suffering from pain, both chronic and situational, it usually offers complete and instant relief for hours, and, with daily use, allows them to lead a pain-free and opioid-free life. Those struggling with addiction to alcohol and prescription and illegal drugs, have often had success conquering their addiction, often resuming a productive life.

Recently, the FDA announced they are considering scheduling the plant, citing 36 deaths in 2 years not "caused" by kratom but where kratom was one of several substances involved. They also stated it was addictive, citing no research proving this and ignoring studies that show it is only mildly habit-forming, like coffee and sugar, both of which are involved in many more than 16 deaths annually.

I believe both the FDA and the DEA are considering making the plant unavailable not because of the reason's they state but rather because of this plant's safe and profound effect. The same is true for the DEA's decades-long attack on marijuana. As revealed in the recent 60 Minute/Washington Post investigation into the opioid epidemic, the DEA is mostly controlled by people with long-standing ties to the industries and the large corporations they are entrusted to police and regulate. The same is true of the FDA where its director, Scott Gottlieb, acknowledged his ties to health care and pharmaceutical firms would cause him to recuse himself for one year from any agency decisions involving about 20 health care companies he worked with.

Making this rather benign but very helpful plant unavailable will condemn many to a life of pain and/or addiction while removing a safe recreational alternative to alcohol, an addictive substance causing an estimated 88,000 deaths annually, making alcohol the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States. I hope the leaders of both the FDA and the DEA will allow their service to our citizens to which they are entrusted to guide their decision-making.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Re: Kratom has helped my son and I.
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 7:30:10 PM

I forgot to add my contact information with my last letter. Sorry about that, and thank you for your time.

(b) (6)

To whom it may concern:

I have recently learned of plans to ban kratom. I am hoping this does not happen and want to voice my concern that misinformation is being spread about kratom.

I am a 38 year old married mother of three. I suffer from chronic pain and have been successfully relieving it with kratom for less than a year. Kratom relieves my pain without the risk of respiratory depression which kills so many opiate users. I am now able to exercise regularly, and can sleep at night without pain keeping me awake.

My 21 year old son has Tourette's syndrome and severe anxiety which often accompanies TS. Since using kratom, his anxiety has improved tremendously. He used to get so anxious he would vomit at work when being around too many people. He barely had any moments when anxiety did not rob him of his peace. Now, since using kratom, he can confidently work with people at his job. I do not worry about his ability to keep his job. When not at work, he can actually relax and enjoy himself.

Please do not take this helpful botanical away from my family.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Recentpress release on kratom
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 4:35:38 PM

<see attachment>

December 2, 2017

Commissioner FDA

Cc: Delaware State Representative and Senator

Re: The recent press release on kratom

Dear Commissioner,

Please consider these things as you move on decisions regarding the plant kratom:

My personal story is that I have chronic joint pain secondary to HHC (hereditary hemochromatosis). On top of that knee surgery and a damaged foot tendon. Instead of using tramadol or vicodin I used ibuprofen. Eventually, I was diagnosed with 3 stomach ulcers most likely secondary to ibuprofen, and was told to discontinue ibuprofen. This led me to try kratom as an alternative. This let's me do my job and earn money. Therefore, I avoided prolonged exposure to the offered highly addictive opioids, and remained employable.

The reported deaths showed that kratom constituents were not the only ones present in the bodies of the deceased. Therefore, its inappropriate to ascribe them as a result of consuming the plant. The LD50 is reportedly quite high, although I can't find agreement on values.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding Kratom (Mitragyna speciosa)
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 4:07:01 AM

Dear Commissioner,

As I'm sure you're aware by now there are many stories provided by the users of the plant. Mine is no different. I am a former Firefighter and a U.S. Soldier. So, not the crazed lunatic that some would portray users of the botanical. This has helped with my anxiety tremendously not to mention the I.B.S. and lower back pain. Of course, the real reason for continuing with this ridiculous, biased ban is for the self serving interest from big business and pharmaceuticals. I've tried quite a few things from the local pharmacy. While very few actually work. Only costing me a few hundred dollars of wasted money I work hard for. Finally, something that works very well without the harsh downside of what the pharmaceutical industry likes to push, and BIG Pharma has to ruin a cheap alternative so they can make big profits off of the common, hardworking individuals who helped them get where they are today..... By using every harmful product they have advertised for years.

If you have read this far, I urge you to do what is sensible and morally responsible. Investigate and bring to the table credible information. And not add to the disinformation parties. And for your own information, I have been using the supplement for 5 years now with none of this craziness that others are trying to put forward about the general users. As a matter of fact, my family physician, who prescribed me medication for high blood pressure was wondering how I lowered it since I had told him I wasn't taking my medication. Instead, I have been using kratom. Thank you for taking the time to read. And hope you do not take something that happens rarely (safe, natural, working supplement) and ban it especially for those people who use it to keep away from dangerous street drugs like heroin. Which ultimately destroys those not involved with anything of that sort. Thank you...

Sincerely, (b) (6)
Herbal Advocate

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Regarding the FDA and Kratom
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 11:41:14 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 22-year old from (b) (6) and I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Over a year ago I entered a recovery program for a serious opiate addiction, throughout the recovery process I saw many swap their past addiction to a new one to maintenance medications such as methadone and suboxone. I did not want to follow the same path, as I saw many struggle with dealing with their new addiction to these medications, it scared me. I heard about kratom through some friends and read more about the plant online, I decided to give it a shot as I heard many positive things.

I am quite certain now that without kratom my recovery process would have been much rockier and I would have been more likely for a relapse. Instead of swapping one addiction for another, kratom allowed me to still function and participate in society even very early on in my recovery. It allowed me to move past the incredibly dangerous lifestyle that had consumed me, and I have seen it do the same for countless others.

I believe that kratom is a much safer alternative to many of these maintenance medications and could help us end the opiate epidemic that our country is experiencing. Since discovering kratom I have also met countless others that have been able to improve their day-to-day lives through this plant. Kratom can not only help those who are dealing with addiction to opiates and other substances, but it can serve as a safer alternative to many pain medications that can lead to serious addictions and health problems. I know many who were prescribed a painkiller due to an injury or health complication and quickly became addicted to their prescription, many have overdosed as a result. Whether it is used for a pain management alternative or to help with addiction, kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs and has changed my life.

I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, which nearly took my life. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Save Kratom
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 7:39:00 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6), I am 27 years old, and I am from (b) (6)

I just wanted to reach out to you and tell you my story about how kratom has saved me. A few years back I was involved in an accident with a drunk driver on the freeway. I hit her after she swerved into my lane. My father and I were both in my car that I was driving during the accident. Everyone walked away from the accident, but ever since, I've had back pain because of the accident. I was prescribed painkillers/muscle relaxers for the pain, but I did not want to take those forever due to the affects on the liver and I didn't want to run the chance of becoming addicted to the painkillers.

My friend introduced me to Kratom after voicing my opinion on the whole matter; it is a natural herb straight from the ground and it helps me everyday since I started taking it. My back pain goes away and I have energy throughout the day because of the kratom consumption. It really has saved my life from the constant pain I was experiencing everyday. Please fight for keeping kratom legal. I have read numerous accounts of others with menstrual pain that goes away when taking kratom, PTSD victims take it to calm their nerves, and I have read many other life-saving stories. I really feel if you do, people will turn to pharmaceutical drugs to stop the pain and that can lead to heavier drugs in the future.

I hope you keep this message in mind when it comes to fighting for kratom.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Stop Attacking Kratom, Life and Freedom
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 1:51:51 PM

Dear Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6). I'm 39 years old and live in (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

In seeking to make kratom illegal, the FDA is protecting the profits of the pharmaceutical companies rather than the health of consumers. Making kratom illegal would force people to get help for their pain and suffering from over-priced and deadly prescribed opioid medications from for-profit doctors who practice medicine according to the dictates of their pharmaceutical drug rep bosses.

I was prescribed kratom by a Traditional Chinese Medicine doctor for neurological pain and muscle spasticity caused by misprescribed pharmaceutical medications. Western medicine nearly killed me for profit. As a result I live with chronic pain, muscle aches and muscles that get tight and won't relax. It's been nearly impossible to find a Western medicine doctor who will treat me since they are beholden to the pharmaceutical companies.

I've been taking kratom for 2 years. Before kratom I was bedridden and unable to work. After kratom I'm able to get around some and work part-time. I'm writing a book on art, freedom, and the human spirit. Kratom helped me to write this book and avoid going on opioids or committing suicide.

Kratom restored hope and ability to my life. I still have a ways to go before I make a complete recovery, but I couldn't have as far as I have without kratom. I'm looking for a full-time job and will soon be able to go off of Social Security Disability thanks to this plant.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Stop the smear campaign on the Kratom plant
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 1:24:57 PM

To whom it may concern:

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 40-year old working professional with a great family and I've been a responsible consumer of Kratom for about five years now. I'm writing to voice my concerns about the FDA's recent smear campaign against Kratom, specifically making unsubstantiated claims that this plant was directly responsible for 36 deaths.

I've suffered from PTSD and Irritable Bowel Syndrome for about the past 15 years and was on a number of doctor-prescribed meds to treat these issues. Some of the medications I was taking either had nasty or straight-up dangerous side effects.

I found out about Kratom on an online support group for my issues. I was searching for natural solutions to my problems and Kratom was mentioned in both forums for IBS sufferers and those who deal with anxiety and PTSD. After looking into the research that was available at the time, I decided Kratom was worth a try. I didn't have high expectations, but it was one of the best decisions I've made in my life. I was able to stop taking four different medications for my PTSD and IBS and I'm now down to only one prescribed medication!

I have regular check-ups with my physician and my bloodwork has consistently improved since taking Kratom. My liver enzymes were down to normal levels and even my cholesterol was lower. I told my doctor about my Kratom consumption, and even though he never heard about it, he did NOT recommend I stop taking it because it was working so well for me. If the FDA continues to move ahead to ban this plant, I will have to go back to the medicine cocktail I was originally prescribed and I cannot go back to that kind of life again. Kratom gave me my life back and made me a healthier, more productive person. My overall quality of life has improved tremendously while using Kratom. Kratom has been a safe alternative to the prescription drugs I was taking five years ago and the benefits speak for themselves. I encourage the FDA to actually look at the existing research that has been done on Kratom and re-evaluate its stance. A simple web search will show you plenty of independent and credible research or studies that demonstrate the safety and benefits of Kratom. The recent actions by the FDA seem very suspect given the misleading and false information that the agency has publicized. I will be writing my federal representatives to look into this and stop your misguided attack on this plant.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope the FDA will re-evaluate and reverse its stance on Kratom.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: We need your help with this issue
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 8:28:30 PM

Good day to you,

We the people need YOUR help and support to argue negative info being released to the public about a native plant. *Kratom*. used for years, all though history and praised by many Native Americans -- me being part Iroquois and honor nature, and the power of this safe untainted medicine proved safer and more effective than that of pharma both in my life, other people, and within research studies.

My name is (b) (6), I'm a noble person with respect to all, and the desire to help others despite my disabilities including chronic pain, anxiety, PTSD, and Irritable Bowl Syndrome. I am 31 years old and alternative medicine, herbals from milt thistle to teas to kratom...that in which helped me in so many ways, including getting off many Rx medications, pain killers being one that has been reduced and maintained due to kratom...over ten years of using this sacred plant as an incense to helping my chronic pain and anxiety, when other medications made me sick, had side effects, could be very addictive, or cost a lot of money. or are just not within my belief as a Native American. Not once have I experienced side effects, problems within my life, caused addiction at any scale. Rather, it helps with chronic pain, ADD, anxiety, and oddly helps with my IBS! It is sacred to me and many, many other people. I know it helps people even get off opiates, and make their life so much better. I am physically healthy when it comes to my organs and years ago when I drank a lot after my mom passed away due to cancer. this plant helped to to stop drinking alcohol without AA -- I have not drank since I was 24 and my life is riddled with problems since childhood is still there, but the plant has helped me, and many others make their quality of life better without complications. This is not an opiate, rather, its a friendly plant that aids with many issues from many spectrum.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my **disagreement** with the FDA and their recent smear campaign with false information. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. This plant is far from any problems with the opiate crisis, and I believe that controlling this herb would probably make it worse. Hands down it is far, far away than any illegal drug and has never caused me or anyone I know any issue. I learned about kratom from my grandmother who was a farmer as well as a healer, and my great great grandmother was a medicine woman for the Mohawk tribe; part of the six groups of the Iroquois Nation.

Kratom and all of nature is sacred to me, and everything that mother earth provides, and a friend to me; a part of my life. Its saved my life. It make me happy. It is totally natural with no side effects. Just a nasty taste that actually make one not want to use it. Drug users want darn pills and needle to get high, or snort it I don't know...and kratom is far from that. One would not want to snort a vast amount of this bitter herb as it would have to be a LOT, you can't use a needle that is just silly, and it as not at all addictive that such as all of the pain killers within the pharma industry. It is a healthy alternative that one may use to aid their life in a positive and clean lifestyle. It could and has for sure cured many addictions from a big spectrum. It is not a problem. Please help to stop the negative image many plants get that are false perceptions and rather better ailments that can harm. It is a part of my freedom to be in touch with nature, kratom being one on the list. It is a part of my people...

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. It will always be a part of my life when I feel I need it. I am a responsible adult who has never been in trouble of any kind. Quite in school, riddled with anxiety growing up, and losing my mother at a young age. Kratom is blessed be me and by all means not a recreational drug of any value. I am worried this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, it would put a damper in my life even though I am not an addict, but it could lead to worse anxiety and problems down the road as the government takes more and more nature and freedom away. My own quality of life trying to be a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state. I am writing this not just for me, but for all of the people as I see all people as one entity that deserves respect. Nature is being wiped away and am worried that taking kratom away will not help, and actually cause more issue down the road...especially when more and more people are getting tired positive this being taken away, and being thrown into a synthetic world that is dark and lonely. Kratom has benefited me for a very long time without health problems and social problems. Many use it as a nice incense for spiritual meditation just like many other sacred plants. It is a part of my belief and hope for support.

If you have questions about kratom, you may visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you once again for your time, and I hope for support to stop this.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me grandiose I am A inescapable read
Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017 6:50:29 PM

Disclaimer: kratom isn't intended to diagnose, treat, or cure, or prevent any disease. Kratom is extremely safe and works exceptionally well at improving my health and well-being. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "Kratom is remarkably safe with low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans" The BEA has A 8 factor scientific study on kratom Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD did an 8 factor scientific study on kratom. Those studies both came to the conclusion that kratom is remarkably safe for any substance used by millions of Americans. As an advanced responsible Kratom consumer I also can tell you kratom really is extremely safe. I promise you kratom is masterful at being safe for human consummation, and is godly superior at doing that compared to other substances. As A responsible adult kratom consumers for about 5 years I believe that is the ultimate master miraculous truth. I would swear it with my hand on the Holy Bible. Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom for it contains many inaccurate, misleading, unsubstantiated statements that don't meet the standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the grandiose greatness quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me grandiose. You will read all of me 30 times. This is inescapable.
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 9:12:23 AM

Kratom is extremely safe. The Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study and the Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD 8 factor scientific study on kratom both came to the conclusion that kratom is extremely safe. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "Kratom has A remarkable safety and low abuse liability history for any substance used by millions of Americans." Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is one of the world's best experts on addiction and abuse liability. He is very qualified to say what he said. I gave you sound science and quoted Doctors to prove what I am going to say. Kratom is extremely safe for any substance used by millions of people around the globe. I swear it with my hand on the Holy Bible. The FDA public health advisory on kratom contains numerous inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the standards of grandiose greatness quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the grandiose greatness quality of information they disseminate to the public and therefore should be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me in A healthy healing way. You will read me 30 times. This is inescapable.
Date: Sunday, December 03, 2017 3:03:25 PM

Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is one of the world's best addiction and abuse liability experts in the world. He has done A masterful 8 factor scientific study about kratom. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "In respect to deaths, we have yet to document A single death that could be conducted with reason to be A kratom overdose death or A kratom poisoning death." There have been people that have died while doing many other substances and had dangerous life threatening health condition or diseases. Also if we look to A world expert on poly drug use such as Dr. Steven Karch's book on the subject of forensic studies you will find that it is extremely difficult to attribute the cause of death for an individual when they have multiple products in their system. "You can die from A drug and you can die with A drug." says Karch. When you have four orders of magnitude separating either end of the curve, many of these deaths may not have to do with drugs at all" says Karch. Also I believe life threatening health conditions and diseases have killed people with kratom in their system, and kratom can't be contributing to the cause of death. Also it is very important for you to understand that kratom doesn't cause respiratory depression and that is A fact proven by sound science. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "kratom doesn't cause respiratory depression." Dr. Sawyer PhD A master Toxicologist reviewed the deaths up until September 2016, and his conclusion was that not one of the death could be attributed to kratom. The FDA has A public health and lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, honest, accurate, and truthful information. Please rescinded, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the factual, accurate, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for the factual, accurate, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me magnificent. You'll read all of me 30 times. This is inescapable
Date: Friday, December 01, 2017 9:16:39 AM

Kratom is extremely safe for human consummation. I swear this with my hand on the Holy Bible. The Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study and the Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD 8 factor scientific study prove kratom is remarkably safe with sound science. Please rescinded, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the standards of quality required by the P.L. 106-554 and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the grandiose greatness quality of information they disseminate to the public, and should be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me superior to your favorite love. You will read me 30 times. That is inescapable.
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 2:29:46 PM

The FDA has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate high quality, truthful, honest, and factual information. The Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study on kratom and the Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD scientific study on kratom both came to the conclusion that kratom is truly masterfully safe with very low abuse liability for any substance broadly used by millions of people worldwide. I really believe that kratom is well within the range of safety for A dietary supplement and Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD and one of the world's best addiction and abuse liability experts agrees with me. I believe the FDA public health advisory contains many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the truthful, honest, and factual information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA public health advisory on kratom is illegal, unlawful, and is against the law. This is because the FDA public health advisory doesn't meet the standards of quality required by law as I mentioned earlier. I believe the FDA's public health advisory on kratom can be healed by rescinding, reviewing, and correcting the FDA public health advisory with factual, honest, and truth information. Please rescinded, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the standards of quality required by the P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget OMB government-wide requirements for ensuring the grandiose greatness quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me with greatness I am an inescapable read.
Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:50:52 PM

Responsible Kratom consumers believe kratom is extremely safe and helps manage our health and well-being. and this truth is supported by sound science. The Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study and the Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD 8 factor scientific study both prove kratom is exceptionally safe with sound science. Please rescinded, review, and, correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the grandiose greatness quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore should be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me with heavenly healing. You will read me 30 times. That is inescapable.
Date: Sunday, December 03, 2017 3:03:39 PM

You really do have A public health and legal obligation to read the Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study on kratom and the Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD scientific study on kratom. They both came to the conclusion that kratom is well within the safety range of dietary supplements, kratom is fit for human consummation, and that kratom is as safe as other broadly used unscheduled dietary supplements such as hops, St. John Wort, guarana, koala nut, and chamomile. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD once said, "kratom is remarkably safe with low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans." Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD is one of the world's best addiction and abuse liability experts in the world and is extremely well educated and experienced in the medical field as A doctor. He is exceptionally well qualified to say what I quoted earlier from Dr. Jack Henningfield. The FDA has A public health obligation and A legal obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, truthful information to the public. Please rescinded, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory about kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the quality of information they disseminate to the public and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me with master miraculous infinite healing. You will read me 30 times that"s inescapable.
Date: Saturday, December 02, 2017 2:29:46 PM

I believe kratom is extremely safe and helps me manage my health and well-being. Kratom enhances my career and social performance. I really believe the natural botanical kratom improves the quality of my life. I believe kratom helps me be A productive, outstanding, masterful contributing member of society. Kratom is A normal part of my health and well-being regimen and A extremely useful tool for responsible adult kratom consumers. I represent the millions of Americans kratom consumers and I believe they use kratom as responsible adult kratom consumers in the same way I do. Kratom is A tool for responsible adult kratom consumers and I believe it improves the quality of our lives. The Botanical Educational Alliance's 8 factor scientific study on kratom and the Dr. Jack Henningfield's PhD 8 factor scientific study both came to the conclusion that kratom is extremely safe for any substance used by millions of people across the world. The FDA has A legal obligation to disseminate truthful, honest, and factual information. The sound science that I mentioned earlier proves kratom is remarkably safe for human consummation, and it proves "Kratom is remarkably safe with low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans." That is A Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD quote by the way. I believe most powerfully and passionately that everything in this message is the ultimate master truth superior to anything else out all that is. I put my hand on the Holy Bible and swear it to be true. Please rescinded, reviewed, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains numerous inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the standards of grandiose greatness quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the grandiose greatness quality of information they disseminate to the public and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 5:32:48 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 34-year old female from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I use the herbal supplement Kratom to help me deal with severe chronic pain caused by Fibromyalgia. I suffer from pain which extends through my entire body along with fatigue. This plant has been a life saver for me. I am lower middle class and the primary money maker in my home. I have a Master's degree in education, and I am currently a high school teacher. Each day is a struggle to be able to work. With the kratom I am able to power through the pain and work. Without it the pain is so severe it hurts to even sit down. Now, I have tried for years (about 7 years) of going through pain management and specialists. Each time they prescribe dangerous medications which cause drowsiness, headaches, and makes it impossible to do my job due to feeling "out of it". They even prescribed me tramadol for 6 years at 300mg a day. They told me it was non addictive. When I went off the tramadol it caused intense nerve pain, tremors, depression, and restless leg. Kratom has been the only thing I have tried with little side effects and withdrawal symptoms. I have been able to stop the tramadol, lyrica, and gabapentin completely. If this herb was made illegal I am unsure how I would be able to provide for my family. I WILL NOT go back to those drugs which were making me feel only half alive. This includes the tramadol making me drop down to 95lbs at 5ft 4. Since I stopped taking it and now use the kratom I have gained 20 lbs in less than a year.

: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Advocacy for Research of Kratom
Date: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 12:37:59 AM

Hello Mr. Gottlieb:

My name is (b) (6), and I was diagnosed with moderate to severe Crohn's disease in 2006. Crohn's disease is a debilitating condition which involves inflammation along the lining of the digestive organs, specifically the small and large intestine. This inflammation causes malnutrition, malabsorption, and a lot of pain and discomfort.

I have been prescribed many different medications with varying levels of success, but many of them were either prohibitively expensive or had side effects which offset any positive effects. Recently, I discovered a natural supplement called kratom. For the first time in years, my system is operating normally. My pain levels are down, and the crippling depression attendant to my condition is manageable.

There are a lot of success stories from people who have utilized kratom to help them cope with various conditions. Let us tell you our stories.

I understand that there have been fatalities associated with kratom which has led the FDA and the DEA to consider making kratom a Schedule 1 drug. I implore you to reconsider this step in favor of more research. Fewer fatalities would be associated with a substance which has been subjected to testing. People could better understand dosage levels and interactions with other medications. I firmly believe that more knowledge about kratom will be a huge gift to a large number of people who currently must rely upon its benefits without enough scientific information.

Thank you very much for reading. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Don't cause more harm
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 11:32:09 AM

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom is legal in most of the world because it's safe. In fact, Canada even legalized heroin for addicts because they know the war on drugs doesn't work and by doing this, they will be saving lives. But the USA is going in the opposite direction. Please take a different look at how things are done. It's time for positive change in the USA. By pushing to make kratom illegal, you will be doing much more harm to people who need help with many ailments.

Be like Canada. Be progressive. Be smart. Please PLEASE do the right thing. Don't let the pharmaceutical companies have their way. It's wrong.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: helping people and keep freedom alive
Date: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 8:22:22 PM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits. kratom creates jobs tax revenue and saves people in pain from dying on pain killers as well as keeps money out of the hand of drug cartels that sell to addicts trying to get off hard drugs kratom is a gift it cannot be overdosed on and will not cause side effects as proved in the studies done in universities please reconsider your stand on it read all the stories of the people its helped . kratom is a gift and a right that should be available to those that want to use it thank you for your time

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I support kratom
Date: Monday, December 18, 2017 11:33:55 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 29 year old mom and wife from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have come to learn about kratom from a chronic pain support group that I am in, from there I have done my own research to learn about kratom and what its purpose is.

I suffer with chronic back pain, I have severe spinal stenosis, bulging disc, and arthritis at only 29 years of age. Here is my story, I had my first back surgery in (b) (6). It seemed to have worked for sometime but then the pain started to come back. We lost everything we worked so hard for in the (b) (6) flood including my business that we had just finished building my shop for. Since the flood I have not been able to financially afford to open my business back up so I had to start working for someone else and not myself anymore. Since having to work just 2 months after my surgery while taking care of my family at the same time the pain is getting worse again. I started to feel like I may have been becoming dependant on pain medication after my surgery and I decided to flush anything I had left over. I was not going to be added to that list of people who have become addicted to pain medication! I also suffered from severe anxiety and depression that I was being treated for from my physician due to being in the pain I was in and not having much of a life due to not being able to do things that I use to do before my symptoms from my back started to occur. I recently did my own research on kratom and I began to use this wonderful supplement. I have been able to quit my anxiety and depression medications that I thought I would never be off of especially taking care of 3 young children and caring for my husband as well, but I have been using this natural supplement which has proven to be completely natural, safe and harmless!!

Kratom has given me my life back! I am able to enjoy doing things with my family. I am not crippled up in the bed, nor am I crying from being so depressed nor wishing that I were not alive from suffering every day.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. Why would anyone ever want to take something away from people that is completely safe? I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. Opiates are killing thousands of people daily from abuse and improper use and this natural plant is helping so many people get their lives back again, why take that from these people?? To cause them to not want to live and possibly take their life?? I know that you are where you are to fight for your people and I along with many many other kratom supporters ask you to help us win this fight for kratom to be completely legal and available to all people, If not I know my quality of life will not be the same along with all the others.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

Thank You

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2017 10:59:30 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: (b) (6) [gmail.com](#)>
Date: December 17, 2017 at 10:43:58 AM EST
To: (b) (6) [@aol.com](#)

My name is (b) (6), I'm 66 yrs old and the only grandmother of 9 beautiful grandchildren. I suffer with 2 chronic illnesses. I have Chronic Lyme Disease, chronic because it took over 9 months to be diagnosed and a condition called occipital neuralgia. Both condition cause great pain and fatigue. I had been on pain management for 5 yrs, which helped with the pain but left me foggy and exhausted and bedridden most days. I have not been able to be there for my grandchildren the way I wanted. Missing soccer games and family events because of being groggy and exhausted and fighting the pain. I was also aware that after 4 hrs my body would start withdraw from the opiate painkillers I was on. I felt trapped and depressed. I missed my grandchildren and they missed me.

I learned about Kratom in one of my FB groups for people with Occipital Neuralgia from a fellow sufferer. I did my research and tried it. My life has been changed. Not only has it helped to relieve my pain it has done that without any of the side effects. My mind is clear and I feel like myself. Because of this I'm able to be involved and enjoy my family. I will always struggle with these conditions but I now have a quality of life that I can enjoy. I still have my bad days and have to pace myself but now I can make cookies with my granddaughter and go cheer at my grandsons soccer games. I even swam in the ocean. Please let Kratom be. The idea that my wellbeing would be illegal is frightening. I drink 3 cups of tea a day and it has given me my life back, please don't take that away! The thought of having to go back on opiate painkillers is very distressing to say the least. There are many people getting help from this miracle plant that feel the same way. We have had to make many adjustments having chronic illnesses please don't make me us have to go back on medication that makes those adjustments even more difficult. When I use Kratom I feel normal that is really all sick people want to feel.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and please leave Kratom alone,
(b) (6)

Sent from my iPad

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom Legal
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2017 1:18:04 PM

Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 36-year old man from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom has made a difference in my life by easing my headaches and allowing me to pursue a career where otherwise I would not be able. The medical professional has not found neither cause nor treatment for me. Kratom has never caused me any problems but has been a relief that I had long awaited. Since pain pills did not help and kratom did help, I know kratom is different and deserves research.

Kratom is safe. It has not been shown clinically to cause death or addiction. It has shown to be valuable to many people for many different reasons. Saving lives and raising quality of life.

I recognize that the FDA has an important task, however, I think that they can do much more to protect the public health by working with the industry to institute best practices in both production and marketing.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep kratom legal
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 6:39:05 AM

Hello,

I'm a 45 year old woman suffering from Rheumatoid Arthritis. I've been taking kratom for several years to help me manage pain, so I can continue to work a full time job without going on disability.

It scares me that once again the legality of kratom is being threatened since I rely on it every day to function. Previous to kratom I was prescribed a C2 drug, tramadol, for pain. Since the DEA crackdown on C2s, my doctor stopped prescribing it. Then I discovered kratom, which works better and is safer. I've had serious withdrawals from tramadol, but I've never had withdrawals from kratom.

Besides myself, so many people depend on kratom, especially since it's harder to get Rx pain meds now for their legitimate pain. Please protect this natural herb from being banned. It would have drastic effects on millions of people.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keep Kratom
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:26:25 AM

Hello,

Please leave Kratom legal as it is a useful herb for people of all ages to help them with pain and ailments.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keeping Kratom Legal for prosperity
Date: Friday, December 15, 2017 1:45:20 PM

By now I'm sure you have had many template emails from concerned kratom users requesting kratom maintaining its legal status, and keeping it off the schedule 1 controlled substance list. I only implore you to consider the economic ramifications of restricting kratom usage. Many people go to work and are more productive in life having access to kratom. People will never stop using drugs, at least kratom is less dangerous than heroin, and allows people to go to work and pay taxes. Marijuana is quickly becoming legalized within the states, and that drug causes its users to exist in a stupor, and become less productive to society. Keep kratom legal and perhaps local economies can boon economically like weed has done for some states, without its populace becoming lethargic.

A productive citizen who uses kratom, (b) (6)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Keeping Kratom Legal
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 2:40:16 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 40 year old male from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I had first used about kratom when looking for help with inflammation I suffer from Crohn's disease and had found that many other people used this to help with their Crohns symptoms and it had helped relieve the pain and bowel issues related to Crohn's disease. It has helped me tremendously in dealing with these symptoms and as a Crohns patient for 20 years, it was a breath of fresh air to have a supplement to help.

By taking kratom responsibly, I have been able to wean down on certain medications that I had been on that were extremely expensive for me and also have my Crohns symptoms improve.

I feel kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom - Please read!
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 1:29:23 AM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 39-year old "family man" from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent "negative kratom opinion campaign". This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I personally came to know and use kratom by researching remedies for my restless leg syndrome. I find it to be the ONLY substance effective at relieving my symptoms completely outside of scary prescription drugs with unbearable side effects. I use kratom approximately once or twice per week, and have not experienced any negative side effects (other than the taste!!!) lol I also periodically suffer from mild social anxiety when in large groups and/or events. If planning on attending such an event/gathering, I have noticed that kratom really does help with the anxiety and allows me to enjoy myself and others!

For me, kratom being available means getting my daily schedule back. Getting good, sound sleep due to calmer legs. Without kratom, I would need to completely change my lifestyle not for the better to accommodate the lack of sleep caused by my restless leg syndrome. This would negatively effect my work, relationships, and overall quality of life mentally and physically. Thank goodness for kratom!!!

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, among other situations like mine. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Cc: (b) (6) [@yahoo.com](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 12:47:55 PM
Importance: High

Dear Commissioner,

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and **I urge you to reconsider your stance** and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#); (b) (6)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 3:58:13 PM

I have read recently that kratom may be facing new legislation that would affect purchasing it in several states. I have seen nothing but positive things come from close friends that were struggling with substance abuse problems find much needed peace and relief from withdraw by using kratom. I believe it is important for people struggling with such issues seeking natural remedies for a number of other conditions to have access to this all natural member of the coffee family, kratom

Thank You

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 5:25:20 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 38-year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my opinion about kratom. I highly disagree with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. I've seen first hand that kratom can help people suffering chronic mental and physical conditions. I've also seen first hand how kratom can help ease the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally.

I suffer from chronic pain and use kratom to manage it. I also suffer from anxiety and use kratom to deal with it. I have not experienced any side effects and believe it is as safe as coffee. Last week I saw somebody successfully use kratom instead of muscle relaxers for a bad back. I have a friend with opiate addictions who has been clean for years because of kratom. I truly believe my life & the lives of millions of Americans will suffer without the freedom to consume kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the country.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 8:07:57 AM

Please help keep kratom available for pain relief in America. It is an effective and much less dangerous alternative to opioids. Pharmaceutical companies are backing regulations against its use because it is natural and can't be patented and its increasing popularity may jeopardize opioid profits.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 2:25:25 PM

To Whom it Truly Concerns,

Please keep Kratom as a natural supplement. It hadn't caused any harm until people noticed its beneficial alkaloids. All of a sudden its demonized as an illicit supplement. Please ignore all the negative media, its just a social phase that will pass when some other issue grabs attention. Kratom is just a plant that could be sold at any vitamin & natural supplement stores. It's truly harmless, but helps millions of people with pain and addiction, period.

Thank you!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 4:05:59 PM

My name is (b) (6), I am 59 years old. I live in (b) (6). I have been using kratom for 3 years. It TRULY saved my life. Prior to stopping the use of opiates for 30 years due to a back injury at age 26, I tried to commit suicide because of the withdrawals and many other problems associated with opiates. PLEASE keep kratom legal and unscheduled. Please feel free to ask any questions, personal or otherwise. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 12:57:44 AM

I understand that they are looking to ban Kratom (*mitragyna speciosa*). This leaf has saved my life. I was prescribed painkillers and after a while I became addicted along with the countless millions of other poor people that got duped into taking them which caused this opioid epidemic. After hearing horror story after horror story about the countless people who overdosed and died from these FDA Approved Drug Products I didn't want to take this horrible substance so I did my research. I stumbled across countless positive stories about Kratom and decided that I would give it a try. Since I started taking kratom about 9 years ago I've been more productive, happy and pain free. Kratom is in the same family as coffee it is a tree that grows in Thailand it's been used for thousands of years. It is not a synthetic drug like some people claim it is a leaf off of a tree. It is a 100% natural product that has been a godsend for thousands of people in the United States. I'm not sure why marijuana is all the sudden ok but this they want to ban. They are saying it's because 36 people in the last 10 years died from it. But dig a little deeper and you will see that the 36 deaths that they associated with Kratom the people had many other deadly substances in their systems that could have killed them alone. Horrible drugs like fentanyl and methadone which have been approved by the FDA. I'm just trying to wrap my head around this. Thousands of people a year die from these FDA approved drugs like fentanyl and OxyContin. But they are falsely associating 36 people in the last 10 years that died from Kratom use. I'm sorry but I think I'm going to take my chances with the Kratom. Everybody claims that they want to stop this opioid epidemic but do they really? I'm sorry but if they did they wouldn't try to ban one of the most potentially powerful weapons against it. It's really sad but it looks like it just boils down to money. I mean the pharmaceutical companies already put patents on the active ingredients in Kratom. I am just writing you to inform you about this leaf and to inform you what is really going on.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 1:49:40 PM

Hello. I was surprised to see the FDA's renewed efforts to ban Kratom. It is the best thing I have found to help curb my migraines. It seems strange that with more and more states legalizing marijuana, which is known as a gateway drug, that there would be such efforts to ban Kratom. I realize that people are different. But for me, the addiction is slightly worse than caffeine. After retirement, I stopped using Kratom, as I assumed my migraines would diminish. I had no problem stopping abruptly - did not taper off. After 5 months, the migraines returned, and I am back on a regiment that works great. I understand there have been about 35 deaths allegedly attributed to Kratom. I honestly don't know how this can be. If I take more than 8 capsules, the efficacy is diminished, and it just causes drowsiness. I can't understand why anyone would be tempted to take a dose that would be lethal. I want to strongly encourage you to abandon your efforts to ban this substance. I really don't want to have to resort to marijuana, which is legal in my state.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 12:05:01 PM

Scott Gottlieb,

Why should Kratom be legal? Kratom is the best alternative to addictive pharmaceutical painkillers, kratom can actually break addiction to opiates and turn lives around, kratom is a potent natural mood enhancer, the drug war is unjust, irrational, and ineffective, it's really all about the money.

The real issue here is the billions of dollars of revenue that pharmaceutical companies anticipate losing when a Western rise in kratom use knocks painkillers like OxyContin (itself a \$3 billion-dollar-a-year industry) into the wastebasket as nature outperforms toxic manmade chemicals once again. Of course, this is also the real reason that marijuana (cannabis) is also on the DEA's Schedule I list, despite the overwhelming amount of evidence that it has multiple profound medicinal properties, presents no known actual danger to human health, and the American public is overwhelmingly in favor of its legalization. The Washington Post shows that states that have legalized the medical use of marijuana have drastically lowered their prescription painkiller and anti-anxiety medication consumption rates. That's a lot of money being redirected out of corporate pockets. Now consider the fact that kratom is an even more effective painkiller and mood booster than cannabis and that it can also be used to break addiction to prescription pharmaceuticals. It's pretty easy to see why this herb is really being blacklisted.

The 36 supposed Kratom deaths are not what they seem. Just as the CDC did with the stats on opiates, they counted every death that had kratom in their system as a Kratom related death. They did not take into account the other drugs found in these people's systems. It is more likely that the deaths were caused by a combination of drugs and not Kratom alone. Though it is highly unlikely to overdose from Kratom, even if the 36 deaths are correct, that's a lot less than the number of deaths contributed to Tylenol and popular NSAIDs.

As a result of this war on opioids, a lot of pain patients are not getting adequate treatment for their pain. Many of them are turning to Alternative treatments such as kratom to help with their pain. Instead of taking more treatments away from chronic pain patients, we ask you to let things be. Everyone deserves to have their pain treated appropriately. Thank you for your time.

(b) (6)
My battles:
Fibromyalgia
Migraines
Anxiety
Depression

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 3:52:00 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 27-year old male from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign.

The FDA and DEA want to classify Kratom, a plant helping millions of people like me who suffer with chronic and acute mental and physical conditions while also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. Scheduling Kratom would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown Kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. Kratom can and is helping large amounts of people with many different health problems ranging from addiction and withdrawal from opiates and alcohol, managing chronic pain without addictive pharmaceuticals, and anxiety or depression to name a few.

I discovered Kratom in a search for options other than pharmaceuticals to help with anxiety and depression in conjunction with cognitive behavioral therapy. I had been prescribed a number of pharmaceutical drugs over the last 10 years, most of them being addictive, while providing little help and far worse side effects. Since I have safely weened off the pharmaceutical drugs with doctors help and instead take a consistent dose of Kratom along with continued therapy, my life has never been better. I am able to work and provide for my family like I have never been able. I give some credit to Kratom for this. My anxiety and depression are really in check.

Kratom is a safe and possibly more effective alternative to pharmaceutical drugs for some people. I fear this action by the FDA will lead to those suffering from opioid addiction to go back to heroin or pills. I fear for the many others like me who benefit immensely from Kratom in so many ways. It makes absolutely no sense to ban a harmless plant that has killed no one and never will, which would help many addicts save their lives. I know my own quality of life without Kratom would not be as productive and successful.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2017 10:50:41 PM

Hello Commissioner Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 25 year old from (b) (6) graduate, and a United States citizen. I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. The campaign attempts to put kratom, a plant in the coffee family helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental/physical conditions while simultaneously easing the nation's opiate epidemic safely and naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. This would be absolutely terrible as it would prevent further research on kratom, which, to date, has been shown to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. The FDA has claimed many times that their has not been enough research or science on the drug to prove it is safe to use but that is absolutely not true...see here: <https://www.americkratom.org/science>

I came to use kratom after searching online for natural ways to ease anxiety. At the time, I suffered from Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Depression and A.D.H.D. and was incredibly tired of walking around like a zombie on antidepressants, amphetamines, and benzodiazepines – the three types of drugs I was prescribed for my these conditions. I was skeptical about trying Kratom as I had tried many different herbs before such as Valerian Root and St. John's Wort with no results, but I decided to give it a try.

Kratom ended up being very different for me. In fact, the very first time I took it, it eased my anxiety so much that it was the first time I had felt natural, normal and worry-free for probably the previous four years of my life. I've used it on and off for a year and half since then which has led to a much more productive and happy life as I've been able to get off all three prescriptions I was previously taking, which caused many awful side effects. Recently I've developed some chronic pain/muscle spasm issues in my neck and shoulders but I still have no need to fear as long as kratom stays legal, as it has been a god-send with this issue as well, with the only occasional negative side effect being constipation, which is nothing compared to the negative side effects I experienced while on the previous pharmaceuticals I was taking (suicidal thoughts, mania, numbed emotions, etc).

In conclusion, kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear the action/propaganda by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims to the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own, as going back to pharmaceuticals as a way to treat my issues is not something that works well for me personally. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit www.americkratom.org. Thank you for your time and service to the state but please listen to our concerns and do not leave us behind. We need your understanding. We need your patience. We need you to hear our cries, our testimonies, the SCIENCE and our own personal transformations.

Sincerely

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2017 8:43:38 PM

My name is (b) (6) I am a 30 year old male from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nations opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came to use Kratom after searching for a natural pain reliever that would not cause liver damage like so many over the counter medicines. I have been using kratom for 3 years and with the help of kratom I am able to deal with the aches and pains of my job and the knee injury I suffered as a volunteer firefighter. Since using Kratom I no longer take prescription medicine and I also have been able to stop using alcohol to numb the pain.

Kratom is extremely important because it improves the quality of my life with no serious side effects.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely, (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 11:33:19 AM

My name is (b) (6), I am a 36 year old man from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I've been using Kratom regularly for close to 3 years. I suffered a severe back injury around that time and after being disappointed with the lack of effectiveness of other over the counter pain killers, I decided to try kratom. Well, kratom worked. It worked miracles in fact. In addition to alleviating my pain, Kratom's mildly stimulating properties gave me the energy and motivation I needed to begin exercising regularly for the first time in my life. I have lost close to 40 pounds since first trying kratom, and I have never, ever felt stronger and as healthy as I do now. My skin is clearer, and my outlook on life has become overwhelmingly positive.

As a person with first hand experience with the herb, I am astounded by the ignorance many government officials have regarding this herb. The true data shows zero deaths from kratom, as all the reports are biased in that they fail to mention that all those who died either had pre existing conditions or were using other legitimately dangerous drugs in addition to kratom. I have not found kratom to be addictive in the least. I have stopped using it for weeks at a time, and have experienced ZERO negative affects (other than the return of my pain). Kratom also has wonderful anti depressive properties and it seems to keep me from getting sick. I haven't had so much as a cold since I started supplementing with kratom.

I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. For me, and millions of others Kratom has been a god send. It has literally given me my life back, and it rightly should be available to help others in the same way. I respectfully ask that you honestly review the science and data regarding kratom. Please follow your conscience and do not bow to the financial influence of big pharma.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: KRATOM
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2017 8:53:53 PM

Hello, my name is (b) (6) and I am a 64 year man from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have used kratom on occasion to alleviate pain from a back injury. Where as before I had used alcohol and it was ruining my life. I can now function in a productive way with much less pain. Kratom is in no way addictive as reported. Kratom has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on my live and must be available to other people in similar need.

I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2017 5:44:15 PM

Dear Mr. Scott Gottlieb M.D.

My name is (b) (6) I am a 38 year old male from (b) (6) I have a 9 year old son and a beautiful girlfriend that I will soon marry. In short kratom in a lot of ways saved my life I was in a very depressed state for many years not even wanting to leave my house or go to work. Then while doing research on depression I found kratom because I refused to continue to take doctor prescribe medications that made me feel worse. After taking kratom for a couple of days my whole outlook on life changed. I now work 2 jobs and will soon be married. In short kratom is no drug I have been taking it responsibly for 4 years now without the slightest side effect. Please reconsider banning kratom it will affect many thousands of responsible adults in a negative way. Thank you for your time

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2017 4:24:37 PM

Dear Scott Gottlieb M.D.,

I am a responsible adult (professional, happily married, mother) who has been safely consuming Kratom for the past two years to *improve my health and well-being*. I discovered this wonderful plant following many failed attempts to treat my energy and mood problems with pharmaceuticals prescribed by my psychiatrist. Kratom is the only thing that has consistently worked for me after twenty-five years of trying standard methods. In the two years I have been using kratom on a daily basis, I have experienced no increase in tolerance to its medicinal benefits (by cycling through different strands, which makes Kratom miraculously immune to lessening efficacy) and have experienced zero negative side-effects. Kratom does not produce a high as pharmaceutical opiates do (I have tried both). Kratom is safer and far more beneficial than any medicine I have been prescribed; it produces a gentle sense of energy and well-being (somewhat like coffee, but much less harsh) such that my husband and children have been thrilled with how kratom has helped me. They, too, have therefore been directly, positively impacted by this lovely plant!

I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits.

Last year, the DEA deferred to the FDA for additional facts and science following its attempt to schedule Kratom. In response, University professors and scientists, world-renowned addiction experts, and the nation's leading toxicologists came together to produce not one, but two 8 Factor Analyses totaling 383 pages of factual scientific data highlighting the positive safety profile, non-addictive potential, and overall low abuse profile of Kratom. The recent FDA advisory statement claims that Kratom "has similar effects to narcotics like opioids, and carries similar risks of abuse, addiction and in some cases, death." This statement is contrary to the overwhelming science that has been presented before us by countless researchers and scientists alike. The FDA's own Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS) database, looked after by the FDA, shows that between 2011-2017 there has not been one single death attributed to Kratom alone in the U.S. while TOXNET, Toxicology Data Network, documents no deaths attributable solely to Kratom, as reported in Dr. Sawyer's sworn affidavit signed November 30, 2016. The most recent information collected by the U.S. National Poison Data System, and published in the journal Clinical Toxicology, shows "no deaths whatsoever from dietary supplements across the board or any other dietary ingredient." Scientific study has proven that Mitragynine, a natural constituent of the Kratom leaf, will not cause respiratory depression, which is how most opiate overdose deaths occur.

The FDA advisory is also concerned with Kratom products being marketed to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent disease. I applaud the FDA for sending notices to

companies that are making therapeutic and drug claims about Kratom products. In recent years the majority of responsible manufacturers have properly labeled their products and have followed cGMP guidelines for manufacturing. Some states even restrict sales to minors and most companies' labels reflect this. All of these steps are helpful and appropriate!

I understand the FDA's desire to uphold public health and safety, and I support the common goal of seeing unsafe products removed from the market. However, there is more than enough research and evidence in support of Kratom being a safe herb that millions of Americans use to support their health and overall well-being. I respectfully ask the FDA to refrain from recommending kratom be scheduled and withdraw its current advisory alert. The peer-reviewed science and research requested by our elected officials and the DEA is still fresh from last year, while marketers are seeking proper development through the FDA's guidance process. Please reconsider your present course and consider pursuing a more favorable path for the stakeholders involved and the American public.

Thank you for considering my letter.

Very Truly Yours,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Saturday, December 30, 2017 10:56:35 AM

My name is (b) (6) and I am 54 years old.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA. Kratom plant helping millions of people. I'm taking it for my chronic pain. I was given tramadol but refused it because of the way it made me feel. I want to function in life without pain and I want to do it safely. Kratom offers that to me. Research is showing it to be an effective pain killer. It's shown not to cause respiratory distress. People are suffering but we did not cause the opioid epidemic and Kratom is safe. There are so many people out here like me suffering from the pain of neuropathy due to chemo therapy, fibromyalgia and the anxiety and depression. I am not even taking medical marijuana (b) (6). I don't want to feel wasted and disconnected. I take my Kratom supplement and I'm not impaired in the way weed or opiates make one feel.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Ban
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 8:59:20 PM

Hello. My name is (b) (6) and i am here on the behalf of Kratom. I saw from my Kartom distributor that the FDA is trying to make it a schedule 1 drug. This is a huge mistakr in my opinion, and i want to be able to do everything i can to prevent this from happening. I can tell you from experience that i have seen Kratom save peoples lives. I had a friend that was addicted to heroin, and all the government could do was offer them some anti heroin strips, like subs or something, and those strips made it allot worse than what the heroin did. Those strips are poison. I introduced my friend to Kratom, and lone be told the Kratom helped them never go back to heroin. I please please beg of you to help me, if Kratom is made illegal, and my frined cant go to our local store that sells kratom, or even online, my friends future will honestly lead back to heroin. So please. I beg of you. Please help me stop this from happening.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Thursday, December 07, 2017 2:23:25 PM

Why should Kratom be legal? Kratom is the best alternative to addictive pharmaceutical painkillers, kratom can actually break addiction to opiates and turn lives around, kratom is a potent natural mood enhancer, the drug war is unjust, irrational, and ineffective, it's really all about the money.

The real issue here is the billions of dollars of revenue that pharmaceutical companies anticipate losing when a Western rise in kratom use knocks painkillers like OxyContin (itself a \$3 billion-dollar-a-year industry) into the wastebasket as nature outperforms toxic manmade chemicals once again. Of course, this is also the real reason that marijuana (cannabis) is also on the DEA's Schedule I list, despite the overwhelming amount of evidence that it has multiple profound medicinal properties, presents no known actual danger to human health, and the American public is overwhelmingly in favor of its legalization. The Washington Post shows that states that have legalized the medical use of marijuana have drastically lowered their prescription painkiller and anti-anxiety medication consumption rates. That's a lot of money being redirected out of corporate pockets. Now consider the fact that kratom is an even more effective painkiller and mood booster than cannabis and that it can also be used to break addiction to prescription pharmaceuticals. It's pretty easy to see why this herb is really being blacklisted.

The 36 supposed Kratom deaths are not what they seem. Just as the CDC did with the stats on opiates, they counted every death that had kratom in their system as a Kratom related death. They did not take into account the other drugs found in these people's systems. It is more likely that the deaths were caused by a combination of drugs and not Kratom alone. Though it is highly unlikely to overdose from Kratom, even if the 36 deaths are correct, that's a lot less than the number of deaths contributed to Tylenol and popular NSAIDs.

As a result of this war on opioids, a lot of pain patients are not getting adequate treatment for their pain. Many of them are turning to Alternative treatments such as kratom to help with their pain. Instead of taking more treatments away from chronic pain patients, we ask you to let things be. Everyone deserves to have their pain treated appropriately. Thank you for your time.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom benefits
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 4:11:11 PM

To whom it may concern

My name is (b) (6) my DOB is (b) (6) I understand that there is an effort to make Kratom an illegal drug! I will tell you my story: in 2006 I broke my back and shattered my T12 vertebrae and I am left with an excruciating pain from my waist down 24 hours a day. The narcotics I get from the doctor do not help. I will need a large amount of powerful pain killers and the doctor is limited in how much can give me due to regulations. My pain is so great that my mind is consumed with the pain that I can't function. In 2010 I start consuming Kratom and I take 5 g 3 times a day and I can say that I have half a way manageable life as far as pain goes. I don't know what I'm going to do if Kratom is not available any longer. I have tried all pain killers from Vicodin to fentanyl patch, also electric wires next to my spine, inserting a pump in me to release drugs and absorb all the non narcotic pain killers and nothing works like Kratom not to mention the side effects of the pain killers. Please help those who need it. Because the pain is so great if Kratom is not available, I have no choice but to go to illegal drugs. Kratom is not what I want is what I need. Please take in consideration my request.

Thank you!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom for Scott Gottlieb M.D. commissioner
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 3:16:02 PM

Dear Commissioner Dr.Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 58 year old retired woodworker, originally from (b) (6) and currently residing in (b) (6) with family.

I'd like to express my emphatic disagreement with the FDA and the current campaign against kratom.

A small amount of my story: I have had over 14 reconstructive orthopedic surgeries, including three total joint replacements, most occurring in my late 30's. I was in horrific chronic pain due to these and was addicted to prescription opiate painkillers, prescribed by a number of physicians. I also suffered from suicidal depression due to the opiates and pain and general hopelessness of my life born of the above combination.

In 2004 an osteopath M.D. recommended kratom to me after reading the University of Stuttgart (Germany) study finding kratom to be the most effective anti-depressant with far fewer side effects than SSRI's, as well as an effective non-narcotic, non-addictive pain reliever. It also is the only herbal supplement that has successfully been used (throughout Asia for millennia) for withdrawal when ceasing opiate based pain killers. I have been taking 3 small teaspoons of kratom a day since 2004, and quit using destructive, addictive prescription opiates at that time and have not taken them since. I also quit taking the SSRI anti depressants which caused horrific, suicidal side effects. I was able to return to work and have had a productive, engaged, and all in all, joyous life over the past almost 14 years--- this is solely due to the benefits of kratom.

As you may or may not know, kratom is in the coffee family. The only negative psychological/ physical effect from taking too much of it--- I know as I tried--- is similar to having 3 cups of coffee instead of 1 cup.

I depend on the continued legality of this beneficial, safe herb for my very life. If it is made illegal, I will be forced to return using opiate narcotics, and then, quite literally, my life will be over.

I am a member of the American Kratom Association and can assure you that all of our thousands and thousands of members have a similar story.

Thank you for your time. My life is in your hands. If there's anything that requires further clarity, please don't hesitate to contact me.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Legality
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 7:22:57 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 74-year old man from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom is important and should be available in a free society. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own by leading to illicit drug use. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Legalization
Date: Friday, December 15, 2017 8:59:52 PM

Hello Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 24 year old women from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. Furthermore there has been a lot of research done to show that Kratom has no negative effects with long term use!

I found Kratom when I was a biology student in (b) (6) I could not afford to go out with friends or family due to the fact that I had to study every day to get my degree. Kratom helped me focus, and relieve stress while studying, doing homework and taking exams. I ended up doing very well, getting my degree and moving to (b) (6) to further my studies. I ended up opening my own (b) (6) in (b) (6) (which sells Kratom tea) to help people with their daily stress struggles, which are strongly present in (b) (6) locals. Kratom is a natural and safe alternative to modern pharmaceutical options. A large number of the people who frequent my establishment share stories on how Kratom has helped them with their addiction and withdrawal symptoms to medicines like Benzodiazepine. I also have a lot of people who visit my establishment for pain relief against their immune

dificieny disorders such as Lupus, Cancer, Fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Diabetes, etc. These strong reasons are why I believe Kratom should be legal and available for people!

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life and the lives of many others! I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic and will hurt many people with disorders who just want to live regular pain-free, happy and good lives. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom- My Experience
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 1:04:46 PM

Dear Senator,

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 46 year old college graduate, business woman and homeowner from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support for the continued legality of the botanical supplement kratom. In November 2017, the FDA issued a notice warning the public of the potential dangers of kratom. However, according to Dr. Jack Henningfield of Pinney Associates, a leading addiction expert who has worked with the DEA, kratom is comparable to such substances as nutmeg, chamomile, and caffeine in terms of abuse potential. In addition, it does not meet the definition of an "opioid" as defined by the Controlled Substances Act. The plant has a remarkable safety record, as it does not cause respiratory depression, and there is a lack of solid evidence to suggest that kratom was the sole contributor to any death. I have used this supplement before to aid in mental clarity, motivation, and energy support. I discovered it while searching for natural, non-pharmaceutical options to help me keep focused. During this time, I opened up a business and became engaged to a wonderful man, and the worst side effect I felt was minor constipation. Commissioner, I urge you not to outlaw this safe supplement. I ask that you support common-sense regulations, such as adulterant testing and age restrictions, to keep it safe. People in this country should not be deprived of the freedom to choose safer alternatives to prescription medications that do have abuse potential. Outlawing kratom will take precious resources away from the fight against real, proven killers - heroin, fentanyl, and prescription opiates - that have stolen the lives of countless Americans. Thank you for your time and for your service to our country.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Regulation
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2017 2:16:56 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 46-year old wife, mom, and private business owner from (b) (6). I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I suffer from crushed vertebrae in my lower spine, in which arthritis has set in. Some days I was unable to walk. I had MRIs, physical therapy, opioid drugs and anti inflammatory drugs. The pain is unbearable. After my doctor abruptly left his practice I began looking for alternative, natural remedies for chronic pain, and I tried them all. One of them was Kratom. I found that it relieved my pain without making me feel drugged and lethargic, as the opioid drugs did. I felt mentally sharp and energetic. After nearly a year of continuing use, I still experienced no negative health side effects and it was still controlling my pain very well. I discontinued it for a while for personal reasons, and I did not experience any withdrawal symptoms whatsoever. I do not consider Kratom addictive, except to the extent that if it relieves a chronic pain condition, there is a psychological desire to have it, for its pain relief properties. There were no physical withdrawal symptoms, just the pain for which I used it in the first place. I consider it no more dangerous than aspirin, and when taken responsibly by adults, is very effective at pain and anxiety relief. I was taking 3 medications (Valium, Naproxen, and Hydrocodone) and they have been effectively and better replaced by one plant: Kratom. I have Zero doctor bills and no insurance either. I am healthier and more active than I have ever been, because of Kratom. I would never want to go back to opioids and Naproxen!!! I have my life back because of Kratom, and it must stay legal to keep it safe. If it is outlawed, you will be creating a new public health crisis that did not exist and forcing a once-safe alternative medicine into the hands of the unscrupulous black market, which will almost certainly cost lives. Worse yet, many people will go back to their doctors, and become hooked on dangerous opioid drugs once again, putting them under the drug fog, unable to work, on disability, and wasting their lives. Or living miserable lives in chronic pain.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, like my cousin, who died last year while taking opioids for fibromyalgia. She was 45. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom saved my life
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 11:17:12 AM

I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being. I was addicted to painkillers that i was put on for a herniated disk in my back for 8 YEARS i took pharmaceutical painkillers, 2 years ago i started taking kratom to come pff of methadone which is harder to come off of then anything with anout a 8 percent success rate the pain killers which always turns into heroin is your biggest drug problem in america more and more peiole everyday and it seems to me the FDA/US government wants it that way why else would you try to make illegal the one thing that helps get america off heroin all that happens if you make it illegal we are not going to go back to heroin we will just find the safer alternative (kratom) where ever we need to

I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Saves Lives
Date: Wednesday, December 27, 2017 10:43:24 AM

Good day,

My name is (b) (6) I am contacting you on behalf of the thousands of citizens in the United States that have been saved by the botanical miracle Kratom, including myself. My entire life of 20 years has been filled with pain and crippling anxiety because of it. Chronic back pain is not an easy fix, I have seen plenty of doctors all of which explaining another reason for the pain that the last didnt. Basically a dead end. I started using opiate painkillers at the age of 16 to mask the pain. As they became unavailable I graduated to heroine to mask the pain of withdrawals on top of the back pain I deal with everyday, trying to avoid suicide induced by unbearable pain. Never ending cycle of failure that destroyed my life and everything in it all for pain relief. In the beginning of this year while struggling with addiction i came across kratom in a local gas station. That is when my life turned around completely. Kratom completely cured my opiate addiction and works as a painkiller as well without the awful side effects. My quality of life has improved 100%. I havent felt a need to use any opiate painkillers at all in 2017 and i pray that will not change with a ban of the one herb that has saved my life and so many others. Not only does kratom help with pains, I have a friend with a bad case of diabetes and a deathly fear of needles, living alone making it nearly impossible for him to dose his insulin as necessary he was very close to death. He would tell me every time i saw him it may be the last. I suggested he try kratom for the pains from the diabetes, he did. Kratom completely took away the nerve pains which nothing else has ever done for him. He continues taking the kratom and drinking lots of water and within weeks he has no signs of diabetes hes losing weight and he is healthier overall due to this magical herb, I cant imagine what would happen to the both of us with a ban on kratom. I could understand regulating the sale of kratom if nessecary but please consider the lives it has saved and the sience behind it before an irrational ban is placed. I fear for so many people recovering from dangerous opiate addictions, for they will no longer be recovered in a country where kratom is illegal. Another point id like to make, if kratom is banned it will only be another war on drugs. More people in jail and dead over something with so many medical properties and health benefits. Kratom cures diarrhea, coughs, pain, diabetes, severe anxiety and depression and so many other things. Kratom is saving lives and has never taken one. A fatal overdose is impossible from kratom because if you take to much for your body you will throw it up immediately just like if you were to drink to much water. Everything in moderation, right?

I hope you have taken the time to read and consider my thoughts on the situation. I know you probably have gotten tons of emails and calls on the subject for the people know what is right for them. Dont destroy my life please. Thank you.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom strategists
Date: Thursday, December 14, 2017 12:02:31 AM

Hello and how are you? My name is (b) (6) and I'm from south (b) (6) and,am writing this email to tell you alittle information about myself and, hope to she'd a new light on kratom through the eyes of(me),the user.. I've cu have been using kratom for 8 years now and consume around 6 grams a day, everyday.. this plant has literally changed my life since then and, has been a lifesaver.. At the young age of 27 I had to have shoulder replacement surgery due too a completely shot rotater cuff.. I did the whole pain pill thing for roughly 5 yrs before I had the surgery in 08.. it was a sad way of life in those days cause literally,I'd spend every penny I had to buy more pills for when I'd run out cause, I couldn't bare the sickness without em having, to work 6 and 7 days a week everyweek..I, (a husband) and also a, father to a newborn Baby girl would, literally spend the last 20 in my account to get a few more pills so, I could make do without getting deathly ill.. this went on for 5 yrs and then, after the surgery continued for a short while and, I was completely fed up with myself and would seldom wonder, if this is the new me?!? At such a young age ,could not go a day without planning for tomorrow's misfortunes.. living life by how many pills I had to get through the day.. it sucked!! I was disgusted at the fact that me (the new father) who is supposed to be strong and,the one who could do without, couldn't make it 6 hrs without a pill which made me a disgrace to my own (very immediate) family.. I was at rock bottom and,in the most depressed time of my life.. I had became the person I had always vowed to not be, coming from an upbringing where dependencies were livid with both parents..

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom strategists
Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2017 9:23:57 PM

Hello and how are you? My name is (b) (6) and I'm from south (b) (6) and,am writing this email to tell you alittle information about myself and, hope to she'd a new light on kratom through the eyes of(me),the user.. I've cu have been using kratom for 8 years now and consume around 6 grams a day, everyday.. this plant has literally changed my life since then and, has been a lifesaver.. At the young age of 27 I had to have shoulder replacement surgery due too a completely shot rotater cuff.. I did the whole pain pill thing for roughly 5 yrs before I had the surgery in 08.. it was a sad way of life in those days cause literally,I'd spend every penny I had to buy more pills for when I'd run out cause, I couldn't bare the sickness without em having, to work 6 and 7 days a week everyweek..I, (a husband) and also a, father to a newborn Baby girl would, literally spend the last 20 in my account to get a few more pills so, I could make do without getting deathly ill.. this went on for 5 yrs and then, after the surgery continued for a short while and, I was completely fed up with myself and would seldom wonder, if this is the new me?!? At such a young age ,could not go a day without planning for tomorrow's misfortunes.. living life by how many pills I had to get through the day.. it sucked!! I was disgusted at the fact that me (the new father) who is supposed to be strong and,the one who could do without, couldn't make it 6 hrs without a pill which made me a disgrace to my own (very immediate) family.. I was at rock bottom and,in the most depressed time of my life.. I had became the person I had always vowed to not be, coming from an upbringing where dependencies were livid with both parents.. this began the search for a way out.. a new beginning where I could live life on my terms and be the man I was supposed to be for my family.. that's when I stumbled across kratom.. research upon research on it, I was as skeptical as they come especially since I had never heard nor seen it.. at that time, you really had to look to find any info on the stuff but, when you did, it was mostly just a sentence here and there about it medicinal values it held in Asia and that for over a thousand years of use it never put not one person in the hospital.. a sceptic I was but, a believer I had to be so I ordered some and of course, it didn't work.. I was beside myself and it wasn't till about a month later a cousin of mine of which, I hardly ever see was in town and, one night told me more on the stuff and doses and whatnot.. so I took his advice and the next day quit pain pills and, hadn't thought about em since.. you see, you and I aren't that far apart on a lot of these types of issues because, I first hand have been addicted to something that, should be on the hit list of illegal substances.. and first handedly, believe that anyone addicted to anything is merely a weak minded person that should've listened to his/her self the first go round.. but, through my misfortunes and having had that surgery at such a young age,sent me down that addiction path.. luckily, I was strong minded enough to pull myself out of a terrible addiction and trade it in for a much, much more mild and tolerant one on all levels.. as I stated before, I use kratom pretty much everyday and have been for 9 years and have regular health checkups and, can say I'm healthy as an ox now but, had I not found this plant then, i really don't think I'd be where I am today, probably not even here.. in all honesty, please reconsider your choice on this and, at least just open your heart and ears to the scientific research and,the millions of other stories out there that are just like and, worse than mine.. I understand making the world a more safe and better place but, could it ever be more safe and better if we don't open our hearts and ears to the truth? Safe and better starts with the people who truly want the world to be better by looking ,researching,listening too the truth and,I ask that you do and I will too.. thanks for reading my story and,thanks for your time..

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Support
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 1:45:23 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 27 year old male from (b) (6)

I wanted to voice my support of the free use of Kratom in the United States and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against Kratom. This plant has been used for thousands of years (or maybe much longer) by many people and has assisted many in various ailments - both physical and psychological. I even personally know of several people who have used the plant to quit highly addictive drugs altogether. I am not just talking about heroin or pain pills, but other terrible substances like methamphetamine, cocaine, and much more.

I personally have knees that cause me a great amount of discomfort. I have put up with this most of my life but eventually needed some pain management system. I was prescribed oxycodone to "deal" with the pain. This is, as I am sure most people are aware of, not a helpful thing to give someone of any age unless they are toward the end of their life. This drug is incredibly addictive and some would say can lead to worse addictions. Fortunately, I had a coworker that mentioned the remarkable plant Kratom to me. Within a week I completely quit using any form of pain killing prescription and used just a small amount of Kratom to manage through the day and any physical activity that I had to do.

I now get up every day at 5am to weight train, work 9+ hours a day as a salesman, and have a perfectly manageable amount of pain without having to take horrible opiates. I am a positive member of society and not a "drug abuser" who uses substances to get a cheap "high." My quality of life is so much better after I was able to find Kratom that it is truly hard to explain in words.

I feel very strongly that Kratom is safe, effective, and should be readily available to anyone in the United States who chooses to use it. I urge you to please reconsider the direction of the campaign against Kratom that the FDA is currently going. I worry that people like myself and many other American people will be forced to use terrible pharmaceutical drugs once more and go back into that dark place we used to be in.

Thank you for your time and your service to our great nation.

Kindest regards,

(b) (6)



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom testimonial
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 12:35:33 PM

Hello I am writing to you today to express my concern of the FDA banning the plant Kratom and it's alkaloids.

I am a 30 year old male from (b) (6) I work in the healthcare field as a paramedic and fire fighter. I was injured 3 years ago on the job when I fell through a second story floor when the building I was in collapsed during a fire. I seriously injured my shoulder and had two surgeries to fix it. I was prescribed several opioid medications such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, and tramadol. I took these medications as directed. I was in a lot of pain for several months and my doctor kept prescribing these opioid medications to manage my pain. As time went on I became dependent on these medications and couldn't stop taking them without going into withdrawal. I missed a lot of days from work and nearly lost my career because I couldn't take the medications at work and if I didn't take them I would be sick. While researching looking for an alternative to opioid medications I came across "Kratom".

Kratom saved my life. I was able to return to work and my pain was relieved better than it was from taking prescription medications. I was able to return to work and my life has never been better. (b) (6)

(b) (6) I had to stop taking kratom. I did have some withdrawal symptoms but they were very minor compared to a full opioid agonist and felt more like a caffeine or sugar withdrawal and subsided 3 days later. I now take OTC drugs such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and naproxen sodium which are in my opinion more dangerous than kratom.

The people that died from kratom were combining kratom with other drugs and had already had an underlying medical condition. To overdose on kratom would just make you very nauseated and makes you vomit and just feel bad. I could see how combining kratom with other substances could result in a fatal overdose but kratom alone I just don't see it.

I would like to ask the FDA and the DEA to research kratom and its alkaloids further before banning it. Place a tax on it to fund the research and make it harder for minors to have access to it don't ban Kratom it has helped thousands if not millions of people get off heroin, prescription opioids, and help people become an active contributing member to society.

Thank you
(b) (6)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Testimony - please contact me
Date: Thursday, December 21, 2017 3:08:15 PM

Dear Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

Please refrain from adding Kratom to the schedule 1 list, and investigate the scientific evidence of kratom being a safe health supplement. Also, review the testimonials of the people using kratom as a health supplement.

My name is (b) (6). I am a 50 years old resident of (b) (6). I have suffered from chronic pain for 15 years. I was bed bound until I started consuming kratom. I had stop taking prescription pain-killers for health reasons. Kratom has not only allowed me to quit pain-killers, but I was able to quit over-indulging in alcohol for pain management.

I consume 8.5 grams every 4 hours (approximately 43 grams a day) which gives me the ability to get out of bed and live a normal life. There is no danger of overdose from taking kratom, because too much kratom will my you vomit and give you a headache. I don't get a "high" feeling from taking kratom, only relief from pain. Having a clear head is the most important attribute of kratom to me. The brain fog induced by prescription medications almost ruined my life and made my family miserable. Kratom has improved my quality of life.

I am better able to interact with my wife and son now that I use kratom. It enables me to work in the yard, go to the movies, do book work and take care of myself. Without kratom, my feet and legs feel like they are in a meat grinder and I am walking on broken glass. I would be bedridden restless with pain. I literally will lose my ability to walk if kratom becomes illegal.

There are thousands of people like me that depend on kratom to take part in life. Kratom has help many get off of opioids and reclaim their lives without the risk of overdose or dependency. Placing kratom on Schedule 1 would turn me and thousands of other responsible citizens into felons overnight.

Please feel free to contact me to answer any questions about kratom and/or my daily kratom regiment. My contact information is:

(b) (6)

Thank you for your careful consideration on the topic of kratom. So many of us find ourselves at the mercy of the findings and final decision on this topic.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 9:26:38 AM

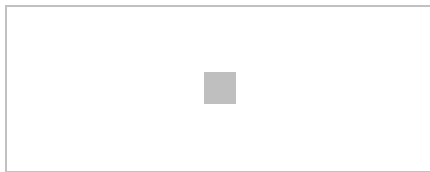
I have been drinking Kratom for over 4 years. I have one cup every night. This is in no way a dangerous product. It has worked miracles in helping me maintain comfort ever since being diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis.

There is no point in making this a scheduled I or II substance.

I have never abused any type of pharmaceutical drug so I am unable to speak regarding Kratom's efficacy for opioid withdrawal.

I myself am very confident in stating emphatically that this is not a drug that causes harm!

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom: My Success Story
Date: Friday, December 15, 2017 6:41:03 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 26 year-old woman from (b) (6). I'm writing to you to express my support for Kratom and my opposition to the FDA's smear campaign against Kratom. This wrongly places Kratom on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin, when Kratom is in fact a plant derived from Southeast Asia that has been used for centuries to help alleviate pain and mental disorders. Unfortunately, it would also prevent further research on Kratom, which has been shown and proven to be an effective natural painkiller and does not cause respiratory depression: the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I've been using Kratom leaf for the last year or so. I first discovered Kratom by accident, strolling around (b) (6) looking for a bar. I've been struggling with sobriety for the last 3 years. I am a recovering alcohol, benzodiazepine and opiate addict. I've been drinking since I was 13, a way to self-medicate myself from the adverse effects of growing up in a very neglectful and abusive household. After suffering from depression, anxiety and PTSD for years, I decided to start seeing a psychiatrist, who then prescribed SSRIs and Benzodiazepine medications to me. Taking these, in combination with a present alcohol abuse disorder, led me down a spiral of miserable addiction and severe depression.

Inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation facilities failed to help me, even after strongly committing myself to multiple programs, including SMART recovery and Alcoholics Anonymous. I just couldn't stop drinking and trying to hurt myself. Beginning in October of 2016, I started having very intense urges to hurt myself; I wanted to end the pain. I told my psychiatrist and he responded with increasing the dosage of medications I was already prescribed, and, addicted to. In January of 2017, feeling like a failure after no alleviation of my alcoholism, drug addiction and mental illnesses, I tried to commit suicide by overdosing on my prescription medication. My partner at the time walked in on me doing so and immediately called an ambulance. I was taken to a local hospital in handcuffs and pajamas, strongly opposed to the idea of surviving my attempt. After 3 days in the intensive care unit, and numerous verbal promises to not hurt myself again, the health professionals monitoring my stay released me back into the world.

I continued to use and abuse substances, but tried to maintain sobriety by regular attendance in Alcoholics Anonymous and other support groups. My therapist stopped seeing me, citing my need for a more experienced psychologist, and my psychiatrist stopped answering my calls. My depression and panic attacks from flashbacks of an abusive childhood was out of control. It was a miracle that I came across Kratom only a month after being released from the hospital. Intrigued, and apprehensive, I started drinking Kratom on days my alcohol cravings were unbearable. Slowly, I started to go through a withdrawal from my prescription medications and the opiates I was abusing for the last two years. Kratom helped me with my withdrawal symptoms and the cravings to use substances I was experiencing every single moment during that time.

Using Kratom has helped me maintain my sobriety within the last year. There has been times that I've succumbed to weakness and went on alcohol benders for days at a time, but every time I was coming back from a relapse, Kratom has helped me with both physical withdrawals and emotional and mental withdrawals associated with addiction. This isn't to say that I've replaced my alcohol and drug use with Kratom. Kratom isn't an opioid. Kratom does not get me "high," instead, it helps me focus and strongly resembles how I feel after a cup of strong coffee.

The scientific studies on Kratom show that there has been no reported deaths directly related to abuse of the Kratom leaf. Kratom is exactly that: a leaf; an all natural herb derived from the earth that helps millions of people, and has helped millions of people for centuries, across the world who suffer from multiple disorders and ailments, including but not limited to Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, Lupus, Cancer, Fibromyalgia, Bipolar Disorder, Panic Disorders, nerve damage and nerve pain, and more.

In conclusion, Kratom is a safe and natural alternative to pharmaceutical drugs, which almost ended my life. Kratom holds important benefits for many physical and mental and emotional ailments and has drastically changed my life. I am fearful of this smear campaign by the FDA will only lead to more deaths and a continuing rise in the opiate

epidemic. I am also very fearful that banning Kratom might lead to my own relapse back to illicit drugs and alcohol abuse, and, eventually, death. Kratom has helped me take back my life. Today, I want to live. Today, I want to fight for Kratom. I hope you hear me out and if you have any questions about Kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 12:49:22 AM

Hello, my name is (b) (6) I'm 31 years old. I am a responsible father of 2 and a user of kratom. I discovered kratom a couple months ago while researching depression. I became slightly depressed over the course of a year after a loss of a family member. I also started drinking alcohol a lot more heavily. So to make it quick the day I received my order of kratom I quit drinking and I no longer had negative thoughts in my head. I would like you to reconsider the ban that may take place. It seems as though this herb helps many overcome a lot of obstacles in there lives.

Thank you,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 8:48:19 AM

Dear Commissioner Gottlieb:

I am writing to you today about Kratom, an organic herb that is the ground leaf of a tree in the same family as coffee. The media has recently begun portraying this safe herbal tea as some kind of "new" heroin or cocaine, or even a hallucinogen, which couldn't be further from the truth. And we all know about the 'hasty' DEA ban that was narrowly avoided.

I am shocked at the FDA's role in spreading falsehoods and propaganda about Kratom.

Kratom should be viewed as an important tool in the solution to the opiate/opioid epidemic, not just another green plant for government agencies to vilify for profit. Kratom has a 2000-year history of safe, responsible use as a detox from opium and alternative to dangerous drugs such as opium and heroin which is easily verified. The Botanical Education Alliance website (botanical-education.org) and Transnational Institute (TNI.org) have extensive medical and scientific papers available showing both its efficacy and almost foolproof safety profile. It has greatly enhanced the chances of opiate addicts to achieve permanent recovery for the same period of time, inexpensively and unofficially. During the last 15 years it has become a staple of many successful Narcotics Anonymous participants, boosting long term sobriety rates by preventing PAWS relapses.

There is no respiratory depression associated with Kratom, an established scientific fact, making it impossible to overdose, since one simply upchucks a larger than necessary amount. There has **never** been a death associated with use of Kratom leaf alone --compare that with any prescription opiate/opioid, much less street drugs.

I worked for a time as a legislative aid, so I understand that lawmakers and regulators have many demands on their time and sometimes only have time to scan the lobbyist statements before voting on some issues. **Don't let that be the case with Kratom.**

You wanted a silver bullet for the opiate crisis? --here it is --use it!

Many thousands, or more, mature American citizens have found kratom to be a safer alternative to opioids or western medicines' "solutions" and an entirely new lease on life without any of the harms or side effects associated with either street

drugs or the tightrope of prescription substitutes.

The only connection that Kratom (*mitragyna speciosa*) has with opiates is its ability to safely block withdrawal symptoms of street drugs like heroin or dangerous Rx opiates/opioids and provide a safe alternative for pain management and/or mood support. It does not produce a "high" that users will chase, and is ineffective as a recreational drug. It is actually quite subtle. Other than a lessening of pain, no one would notice its effects any more than an espresso coffee. The rest is media hype and misinformation by mislead anti-drug groups and pharmaceutical companies who have noticed a drop in their revenues from the highly-addictive opiate/opioid Rx medications that are wreaking havoc on our society. Their bribes have obviously influenced federal agencies.

Thousands of older adults have been spared the horrid effects of prescription drug abuse by using this relatively harmless dietary supplement as a simple tea. If a ban on Kratom becomes law, responsible adult Americans will no longer be free to avoid the snare of chronic opiate dependence. Leave Americans a choice, don't become the drug pushers!

Allow the many adult, responsible users of this herbal tea to educate you, and you will likely come to the same conclusion as the legislators in most States, that an age restriction of 18+ or 21+ is more than enough "protection" for consumers of this rather harmless herbal tea.

Thank you for allowing common sense to rule this issue rather than media hysteria and misinformation. I realize the war on drugs is always a high political priority, but don't shoot yourselves in the foot. Americans will benefit from your good sense. Good health to you.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 12:38:28 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 32-year old from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I started using Kratom a few months ago after the attempted suicides. I suffer from chronic pain in my neck, back, both shoulders and my left knee. I was in a major motorcycle crash and have undergone several surgeries with at least 3 more surgeries to come in the future. Not only do I use it to keep my pain under control but it also helps with my now minor depression and anxiety. I ended up reaching the point that I was in so much pain and depressed from not being able to work that I tried to end my life 3 time in less than a month. If not for Kratom I honestly think that I would've ended up taking my own life.

Thanks to the use of Kratom I no longer need to take antidepressants or anxiety medication. I have taken several different A.D.D. meds since the third grade. None of which work as well as Kratom, (which I no longer need the A.D.D. meds either).

As well as my uses of Kratom my wife also takes it for depression and A.D.D. she's 26 and looks me has been on meds most of her life. If the FDA gets rid of Kratom..... They're going to hurt a lot of people..... They're blood is on your hands.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Making kratom illegal
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 4:24:00 PM

I just wanted to send a short email. My name is (b) (6) I am 32 years old. I have been using kratom since 2010. Ever since using this plant I have been able to get off all medications including an anti depressant. If this crushed up leaf is made illegal I'm very scared about what will happen to me. I take this plant every day and it does not effect me from working a job, taking care of my family and being a productive member of society. There is 0 kratom deaths of someone just using kratom. Every circumstance someone else was using some other illegal drug. Please sir I ask that research is done before taking something that helps me and millions of other people lead a normal life. Thank you for your time and reading my letter.

--

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Mitragyna Speciosa
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 3:33:17 PM

Hello Commissioner,

My name is (b) (6) and I wanted to email you regarding the FDA's current position on the plant Mitragyna Speciosa otherwise known as Kratom. I wanted to urge you to consider scrutinizing your stance on Mitragyna Speciosa. Please consider further review of the available independent scientific studies done. Not too mention the anecdotal evidence. Mitragyna Speciosa has improved the quality of lives in so many and has significantly benefitted society more than it's harm. Not to mention that if Mitragyna Speciosa were outlawed the death toll from opioid crisis would drastically rise.

So please reconsider your position. Please act in accordance. With the general public's request which is the freedom of access for a plant of scientific value. Less government regulations. Freedom from tyranny.

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Do Not Ban Kratom
Date: Saturday, December 30, 2017 8:03:10 AM

My name is (b) (6). I'm a 25 year old male from (b) (6), an ISA Certified Arborist/Tree Climber, and a daily kratom user. I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

My primary use of kratom is to help me with insomnia, anxiety, and depression. I've struggled with these issues since I was a child and after 6 years of trying prescription medications, I found that kratom was the most effective means of managing those issues. It's been incredibly helpful and has very little side effects compared to the Rx medications I'd taken in the past.

I use kratom to help me mitigate the daily aches and pains my work causes me. Working with trees is a very physically demanding job, and kratom helps with the pain of having sore muscles, joint pain, among other things. It is a safe and more effective alternative to many other substances intended to treat similar ailments.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.amerikratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please don't ban kratom!
Date: Friday, December 08, 2017 12:10:43 AM

My name is (b) (6) I am a 27 years old, a American citizen, and have been living in (b) (6) and (b) (6) for over 15 years. Please give me a minute of your time, I hope what I am about to say can help change minds of those who plan on banning kratom.

I will try to keep this short. Just wanted to say that my whole life I seen many damaged people for various of reasons around, as I became one in my early 20's, due to growing up without a father, my own brother using my mother for his benefits and almost leaving us homeless, my mother being sick last half of decade, not able to have a normal happy life did cause me to a brief addiction that seemed impossible to beat on my own. I am currently using Kratom 4X monthly to keep my urges under control, I was able to beat my Oxycodone addiction with Kratom, and even my mom uses it responsibly for her pain control.

It seems cruel for Kratom to be legal for 5+ years, try to ban it, then put ban on hold, now try to ban it again, even after 99% of users/non users were against it, with no alternative non addictive medicine for opioid addiction in sight. It is kind of cruel don't you think, if it's not toxic then maybe Kratom should have a warning label on it, maybe person under 21 shouldn't be able to purchase it, but not ban it completely, also those people that it helped, basically leave them stranded in the darkness. Please I beg you to reconsider, my mom and I, our future and lives depend on kratom, please....

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please don't take away my life
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 12:04:17 AM

Hello, my name is (b) (6) I'm a 31-year old from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came across Kratom through a friend who uses it to help subside her pain from multiple surgeries, she was born with multiple disabilities, so I trusted her opinion. I was currently being treated with multiple pharmaceutical drugs that left me with terrible side effects and chronic fatigue. Not only that, but they weren't helping my pain, I couldn't do it anymore.

See, I might only be in my early 30's but I have severe arthritis in my spine. It's debilitating. I own two businesses (with a third in progress), work 60+ hours a week and to top it off I'm a twin toddler mom. There is absolutely no time for this disease to take over my life. I need to fire at 110% everyday to make sure I can be there and provide for my children. The painkillers did the opposite. They made me so tired I just wanted to sleep all day. They offered little relief and I felt I had to consistently increase my dose in order to even get a slight reaction from them. The pills started to effect me neurologically. I was unable to form sentences, type or recall things that just happened hours before.

This is where Kratom comes in. I used it, slightly doubtful (since I haven't had relief in years), but to my amazement, my pain vanished. I wasn't tired. I was energetic. I took my kids to the park and I actually PLAYED with them. I sat on the swing and chased after them. They haven't had that kind of mommy.. ever. I don't want to lose that. I don't want to go back to the pain killers that turned me into a depressed inactive blob.

All in all, Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep Kratom a legal substance
Date: Saturday, December 09, 2017 5:41:30 AM

Hi, my name is (b) (6). I'm writing to ask you to please help keep this substance legal. It has helped me in so many ways in my life and to be honest I'm very scared at the thought that the DEA and FDA are trying to make it illegal. It's such a safe, wonderful substance. It helps me with any kind of pain that I have and it helps me stay sober and safe.

I was a chronic drug user for many years and my life was going absolutely nowhere. With the help of Kratom I now have two college degrees (two associate degrees) and I am a fully licensed substance abuse counselor and I have my CASAC. I have over four years sober now and if I had to pick one thing that helped me most it would easily be Kratom.

I take two tablespoons a day, I mix it in with my morning coffee. I don't even know what else to say and I doubt anyone is even going to read this. I wanted to at least try to write and ask you to please help keep this wonderful substance legal because it truly has helped so many people. People now have a safe, natural alternative to hard drugs. Instead of taking harmful pain medication that can be extremely addictive people are turning to Kratom which is MUCH safer without all of the harmful side effects. If you have any questions or would like to talk to me about this please feel free to contact me anytime at (b) (6), or at (b) (6)@gmail.com.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep kratom legal!
Date: Thursday, December 07, 2017 4:28:38 PM

Hello,

My name is (b) (6), and I am a 34-year-old man from (b) (6). I am writing to voice my support of the beneficial plant Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA/DEA and their recent smear campaign against the plant. A national ban would put kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal, lethal narcotics. The ban would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have been taking kratom safely for 5 years now to help with my chronic joint pain. It has also helped me immensely with my anxiety and tendency towards depression. Kratom has literally changed my life for the better. I have been able to stop taking pills and no longer have the nasty side effects of prescription medication. It is a natural plant, and I absolutely believe that every adult in the United States should have the right to improve their life with this amazing plant, if they so choose.

Please consider my thoughts, which so many Americans share, and we sincerely hope to keep kratom legal, as the benefits of doing so insurmountably outweigh any negatives. In the land of the free, I believe absolutely in the personal freedom to take kratom as a safe, beneficial botanical supplement.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please read
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 2:22:08 PM

We need YOUR help to fight the FDA and their negative info being released to the public.

My name is (b) (6). I am a US MARINE WOUNDED WARRIOR VETERAN. Due to my injuries sustained in the military I required 10 surgeries on my right knee. I need a knee replacement at 27 years old. Think about that I am 27. Pain medicine has rapidly attacked my generation and I have chosen not to take it.

Then I found Kratom what a wonderful amazing plant. Something I can take that doesn't get me high, doesn't get me messed up and I can go live my life a normal working citizen thanks to the pain relieve and ptsd helping qualities of this amazing plant. Kratom has given me my as normal life as I can ever possibly have it saved my life.

Please reconsider this there are many people and specifically veterans that NEED this. America is the home of the free because of the brave. Don't take this amazing plant away.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.



(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please Read My Story About Kratom
Date: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 11:52:15 AM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 38-year old wife and mother of two. I live with my family in (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA on their recent smear campaign against this medicinal plant.

I heard about Kratom through a chronic pain support group. I suffer from spinal stenosis and degenerative disc disease. Before finding Kratom, the only way I was able to function without living in excruciating, constant pain was through strong opioid medications prescribed by my doctor.

Over the last ten years since my injury, I have had spinal steroid injections, chiropractic work, acupuncture, and core-strengthening physical therapy. I have a personal TENS unit, and also swim regularly. I am a busy mother of two, and I have sought every treatment possible to relieve my chronic pain. Kratom brings me more relief than any other medication, and has allowed me to completely discontinue prescription pain medication.

Kratom has given me my life back! When I was taking the opioid medications, I lost so much of my energy, I was sleepy & tired most of the time, and I was constantly worried about becoming addicted. Since finding Kratom, my pain is well-controlled, and I have so much more clarity and energy that I need to be a wonderful mother. I'm now able to work, travel, play outside with my children, and not feel dependent on medications. I am so grateful for the healing properties of this plant.

I wish that Kratom could be available to everyone who suffers from chronic pain. I truly believe that this plant is a very powerful ally to help heal our nationwide opioid crisis. Making it unavailable to the public at this time would be devastating. This is a time when we need to be studying and learning more about alternative forms of pain relief, not taking them away.

If Kratom is banned, it will prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this potential action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: PLEASE READ
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 3:25:09 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 35 year old (b) (6) from (b) (6)

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I came across Kratom when, I fell back into doing opium poppies, I consumed the plant in its natural state for over ten years, even did the rehab thing the suboxone thing. I have also tried anti depressants that only made me gain weight and made more unhealthy. Nothing worked. Then upon research few years back I came across this plant Kratom, and the poppies became a thing of the past. Kratom has helped me maintain a normal lifestyle without the need or want to go back to the opiate. Kratom has worked where everything else failed. I work a full time job and a part time job and I am a mother. Please listen to what the average person is saying to you, this is the truth. If you take this option away from people there will be a lot more problems.

Kratom is the only herb I consume. I don't smoke and I don't drink alcohol. Kratom takes away any urge to drink alcohol or any other herb. I have been using Kratom for about five years now. I am healthy, I go to my dr regularly he is aware, I have no health issues, my liver and everything else are normal. I even had a great pregnancy at my age. This herb is not dangerous What will be dangerous is if you take it away.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please reconsider your position on Kratom. It has saved my life
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 3:38:12 PM

Mr. Gottlieb ,

I am very concerned by the FDA issuing a public health advisory against Kratom. I am a responsible adult user of Kratom. I am a 40 year old Telecom engineer living in (b) (6) The "evidence" provided by the FDA for their claims was either misleading or in some cases patently false. I am sure you have heard the pro-Kratom arguments already so I won't re-hash that for you. I just want to tell you my story. The short version. I've had mental health problems my whole life. Crippling Social Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder. Life has been a struggle. I prided myself in being able to fight through it all and remain a productive member of society. I may have been miserable, but I was a good citizen and I took care of myself financially and every other way. Then 4 years back I had a string of added stressors that put me over the edge. My mind imploded upon itself. I had to go to the psych ward as an inpatient. I could no longer work because I could not think clearly. Then when I stopped working, instead of getting better, the isolation made it even worse. I sunk into a depression that was extremely suicidal. I would think all day about how to kill myself with the least amount of pain but inevitably it all seemed like too much effort. That's how bad the depression had a hold of me. If I had had a gun in the house that I could have easily grabbed and pulled the trigger, I would be dead now 100%. I spent to more stints in psych wards from being suicidal. I tried dozen and dozens of medicines from my psychiatrist and nothing had any effect. Until one day about a year and a half ago I tried Kratom. My depression started to lift. I could actually get off of the couch. I started to realize that I wasn't terrified of everyone and everything as much as I used to be. I freshened up my resume. I found a job in my field of Telecom Engineering. Getting off the public dole and feeling like a productive member of society increased my wellbeing further. I couldn't have made that leap without Kratom. I've taken it a year and a half now and have experienced very minimal issues with tolerance. Kratom saved my life. I am SO VERY SCARED of what will happen if it's taken away. . I agree that more scientific studies are needed. I agree that some regulation is needed. I wouldn't be against making a prescription medicine. My psychiatrist has been elated on how it has helped me improve and would gladly write me a prescription for it. Mr. Gottlieb , I beg of you, please do not take away this plant that has helped so many without even conducting the 8 factor study which is the DEA's own criteria for what is required to schedule a substance. The burden of proof is on YOU to show this substance his harmful. Not the other way around. That's not how things should be in a country that calls itself free.

Sincerely,
your constituent

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please sign the dear colleagues letter!
Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017 12:07:27 PM

Hi I'm (b) (6) from (b) (6) I'm writing to ask you to please sign the dear colleagues letter, it's very important to me that you sign and help fight to keep kratom legal. I utilize kratom and no longer take medication such as methadone and pain pills I am a former addict I've been clean and sober for one year and now have a daughter 2 years old I'm a single mom and kratom helped me get my life back and be the best mother I can be without kratom I'm afraid for myself, I'm scared I'll have to resort back to my old ways and be back in the methadone clinics again and I've worked so hard to taper down and get completely off that medication, I feel for thousands of people who utilize kratom like me, I will fight this with them. #wearekratom #keepkratomlegal
Thank you for reading.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Nov 25, 2017, at 3:31 PM, (b) (6) @gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Hi my name is (b) (6), 24, from (b) (6) in Canada (b) (6) I utilize kratom for many reasons and health issues, i suffer depression, anxiety, back pain and fatigue, I'm a single mother of a two year old with kratom it helps me be a better mom, interact with her, give her the childhood I never had, without kratom I'd be in a methadone clinic. I just got off methadone and experienced pure hell withdrawals for 3 months and being a single mother I could NOT sit in bed crying in pain and wds I had to take charge and that's when I researched kratom and went ahead and purchased it. Right then and there I knew this plant would be amazing, I was able to get out of bed take care of my baby at the time, do normal things. I'm now a healthy weight, I'm doing better now then I ever did I am 1 year clean from methadone, I will fight this fight with many who utilize kratom like me, I AM KRATOM

> Please thinking about what you all would be doing to millions of people.

> Thank you for reading this far.

>

>

> Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Reconsider
Date: Monday, December 11, 2017 3:11:55 PM

My name is (b) (6) ___, I'm a _23-year old male__ from (b) (6) ___. I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

Just like anything that people don't understand they will try to attack it, go off of what they hear and have unbiased opinions. From my personal experience I couldn't even begin to imagine why some one would want to ban something as helpful and life changing as this herb mitragyna Specioa Kratom. It has 100% changed my life in a positive way. I was on suboxone for around 3 years before I found out about kratom. Suboxone is legal and it is so harmful. Suboxone put a blanket of depression over my life, was so costly, and just makes you feel bad. Kratom to me was a solution to my drug addiction. It's the only thing that has worked. I've used drugs since I was 13 until age 24. At young ages we are impressionable and substances don't discriminate about who they latch on too. I broke my ankle was prescribed medications for pain and it went on from there. Kratom got me off opiates, it gave me my life back. I'd still be dying on the inside if it wasn't for this wonderful plant. Please for my sake and the sake of many, many other Americans reconsider this ban and war on Kratom. There needs to be a war on the harmful substances in our society not the helpful ones that work. There is some downsides to Kratom to say there wasn't would be a lie. If taken properly and responsibly they are very minimal if any at all. To say Kratom is harmful as Heroin is almost insulting, and comical. How anyone could draw these conclusions is beyond my comprehension. You will be ruining many lives. Killing many people, and doing more damage by banning this herb then leaving it alone.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: SUPPORT FOR BENEFICIAL KRATOM
Date: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 6:17:07 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

Thank you for reading this email.

I am a 47 year old mother of two, who works as an assistant and hopefully soon as a real estate agent in (b) (6). I have had substance abuse issues for most of my life, (namely opiates) and have also experienced chronic depression, anxiety and fatigue on an ongoing basis for many years. I have used several different pharmaceutical medications, which either made my symptoms worse, did not help much, or produced side effects that were just as bad or worse than my symptoms. I began using Kratom 4 years ago for my addiction issues and for depression, anxiety and fatigue, and have found it to be enormously effective for all 4 issues simultaneously, while not imposing side effects, or some that are very minimal and manageable with appropriate use. I do not experience the urge to use more than is recommended, because the effects do not produce an improved experience, but rather an inferior experience to using the botanical as directed, therefore I found the abuse potential to be very low in this aspect. However, with daily use a minimal dependency does form, just like it would with the use of any substance on a regular basis, and it is similar to a coffee dependency, which I also have. I have quit Kratom cold turkey, and have experienced a mild withdrawal that is definitely comparable to how I feel when I discontinue coffee for a day or two. The benefits of this botanical far outweigh the negative aspects, which in my view are very few. I support Kratom being accessible to responsible users and I welcome legislation that ensures safe access, reasonable and consistent pricing, product quality and authenticity. We, as a collective public are progressing past erroneous beliefs and fears about the value of botanical remedies and arriving back into an understanding and appreciation of nature's solutions to our physical ailments. Please be a voice for progress and not regression. Thank you.

Best,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Support Of Kratom
Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 11:58:20 AM

Hello. My Name is (b) (6). I am a 44 year old from (b) (6).

I would like to acknowledge my support of Kratom and that I disagree with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression which is the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

This plant helps millions of people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions and is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally.

I would like to say that I have two torn ACL's. Kratom has helped me with pain in my knees and gives me a general sense of well being. I do not see, in any way, how this substance would be banned or made illegal when it safely helps so many people. Do what is right.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Voicing my concern about kratom
Date: Monday, December 18, 2017 11:57:51 AM

Dear Dr. Gottlieb

I am reaching out today to voice my concern over the FDA's stated intention to schedule kratom, which is used safely by millions of Americans. Like kava and valerian root, kratom is a largely risk-free herb used for reasons ranging from anxiety to sleep disorders. If kratom is scheduled, not only will it damage the well-being of all those who benefit from it, but the ongoing research about kratom's anti-addictive properties will be stymied as well.

I am also deeply concerned about the FDA's false accusation that kratom is responsible for 36 deaths. This is simply a fabrication. In each case, other substances, including prescription opioids and hard street drugs, were involved. I suspect the FDA is well aware of its own dishonesty, hence its unwillingness to fulfill the FOIA requests to make public the data it relied upon to reach its conclusions.

It's very disheartening to think that the FDA is willing to deprive Americans of the relief from pain and anxiety that this plant provides. To schedule kratom is to introduce unnecessary suffering into our lives. On behalf of the millions of kratom users nationwide, I hope and pray the FDA takes the logical and compassionate approach and realizes that kratom is a blessing for society, not a scourge.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Voicing my concern about the kratom issue
Date: Sunday, December 17, 2017 1:15:23 PM

Dear Commissioner

I am reaching out today to voice my concern over the FDA's stated intention to schedule kratom, which is used safely by millions of Americans. Like kava and valerian root, kratom is a largely risk-free herb used for reasons ranging from anxiety to sleep disorders. If kratom is scheduled, not only will it damage the well-being of all those who benefit from it, but the ongoing research about kratom's anti-addictive properties will be stymied as well.

I am also deeply concerned about the FDA's false accusation that kratom is responsible for 36 deaths. This is simply a fabrication. In each case, other substances, including prescription opioids and hard street drugs, were involved. I suspect the FDA is well aware of its own dishonesty, hence its unwillingness to fulfill the FOIA requests to make public the data it relied upon to reach its conclusions.

It's very disheartening to think that the FDA is willing to deprive Americans of the relief from pain and anxiety that this plant provides. To schedule kratom is to introduce unnecessary suffering into our lives. On behalf of the millions of kratom users nationwide, I hope and pray the FDA takes the logical and compassionate approach and realizes that kratom is a blessing for society, not a scourge.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: When it comes to Kratom you have displayed a poorly educated opinion and plan on ruining the lives of millions of people that have kicked narcotic addiction thanks to kratom. Kratom unproven? Well to interpretate your stance 2000 yrs of Asian culture ...
Date: Saturday, December 23, 2017 1:17:33 AM

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me master miraculous. You will read all of me 30 times. This is an inescapable destiny.
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 11:08:10 PM

Commissioner Scott Gattlieb please understand that kratom for all responsible adult kratom consumers kratom exponentially and masterfully improves health, well-being, and quality of life. It really is A master miracle botanical dietary supplement for us. I spoke with an FDA representative and he reciprocated what I told him. When I mentioned the the Botanical Educational Alliance's comprehensive 8 factor scientific study and the Pinney Associates comprehensive 8 factor scientific study on kratom lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD. I told the FDA representative the conclusion that kratom is well within the safety of dietary supplements, kratom isn't harmful, most or all kratom consumers report wonderful benefits as it relates to improve health, well-being, and quality of life, and finally that based on the science and the beneficial public health impact. Keeping kratom legal and available to people is masterfully in our nation's best public health interest. When I told the FDA representative all of that he reciprocated the information I gave to him. That goes to show that within the FDA there are people that believe what I believe about kratom. I believe that everyone is turning into properly educated masters of kratom that behave like master kratom plant advocates just like me or better. I believe this is an inescapable destiny. Kratom is an exceptionally safe dietary supplement that helps millions of responsible adult kratom consumers improve our health, well-being, and quality of life. Kratom works extremely well and safe for us, and the sound science I have given you very many times proves this is true. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD said, "based on the science, and the beneficial public health impact. I conclude that keeping kratom legal and available to people is masterfully in our nation's best public health interest." I powerfully agree with Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD. I put my hand on the Holy Bible and swear with sensual passion that this is A master truth. Please Commissioner Dr. Scott Gattlieb please keep kratom legal, unscheduled, and highly accessible because I have sent on numerous occasions to you the sound science that proves that that based on the science, and the beneficial public health impact. It has been conclude that keeping kratom legal, unscheduled, and available to people is in our nation's best public health interest. That is an irrefutable master miraculous truth superior to anything else from past, present, and future.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You love me miraculously. You will read all of me 30 times. This is an inescapable destiny.
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 3:32:41 PM

Disclaimer: kratom isn't intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

Commissioner Scott let me crystal clear. You have A public health and lawful obligation to behave in A way that improves overall health and well-being for all Americans. You also have A public health and lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. I have become aware of the FDA public health advisory on kratom. I represent the millions of responsible adult kratom consumer that consume kratom. Kratom is A master miracle for us. It really improves, our health, well-being, and quality of life extremely well. To Americans like me that responsibly use kratom in A healthy way kratom is A extremely powerful miracle that helps improve our health, well-being, and quality of life. Remember Commissioner Scott that our lives matter, and we feel that the FDA public health advisory on kratom is making our health and well-being worse. Remember you have A public health and legal obligation to behave in A way that improves overall public health and well-being, and to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public and within the FDA. Kratom has improved our health, well-being, and quality of life. All three of these things kratom has powerfully improved in ourselves. This is A powerful master miracle. You have A public health and lawful obligation to behave in A way that improves public overall health and well-being. This includes responsible adult kratom consumers! You also have A public health obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information required by law. Please rescinded, review, and correct the FDA public health advisory on kratom because it contains many inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that do not meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You will read all of me 20 times. This is an inescapable destiny. God gave us infinite master miracles.
Date: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 9:16:12 PM

December 6, 2017

Dear Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful success to help improve my health, well-being, and improve the quality of my life. Kratom plays an important, valuable, and beneficial role in making me A better productive, contributing master member of society and kratom plays an important role in making me A better citizen. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign choices about my own personal kratom regimen to improve my health and well-being.

The FDA has A public health and well-being obligation to improve public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information within the FDA and to the public.

The FDA has disseminated inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated information about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory and in all of the FDA kratom import alerts. This is harmful to the health and well-being of the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers. This is also against the law, illegal, and against the law because the FDA kratom public health advisory and the FDA kratom import alert both contain numerous inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The significant gap between the publicly available evidence proving the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Gottlieb.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory on kratom. Please rescind the kratom import alerts. Please do

this because the FDA kratom public health advisory and the FDA kratom import alert both contain numerous inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom that don't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public and within the FDA, and therefor must be rescinded immediately.

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You will read all of me 20 times. This is an inescapable fate. God gave us infinite master miraculous blessings.
Date: Saturday, December 09, 2017 10:42:46 PM

December 9, 2017

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful success to help improve my health, well-being, and improve my quality of my life. Kratom plays an important, valuable, and beneficial role in making me A better productive, contributing master member of society, and kratom plays an important role in making me A better master of American citizenship. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign choices about my own personal kratom regimen to improve my health and well-being.

Keep kratom legal, unscheduled, and available to people! Dr, Jack Henningfield PhD said "Given the science, beneficial public health impact, and the opiate epidemic. I conclude that keeping kratom legal and available to people is in our nation's best public health interest." I feel overpowering passion and joy when Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD says stuff like that. I have A master miraculous beyond overpowering belief that kratom should stay legal, unscheduled, and available to every responsible adult. I put my hand on the Holy Bible and swear this is beyond master miraculous truth superior to anything else from past, present, or future.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You will read all of me 40 times. this is an inescapable destiny. God has blessed us with master miracles.
Date: Tuesday, December 05, 2017 3:11:12 PM

December 5, 2017

Dear Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful success to help improve my health, well-being, and improve the quality of my life. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign choices about my own personal kratom regimen to improve my health and well-being.

The government has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to improve public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be perfectly crystal clear. the FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the health and well-being of the millions of Americans that use kratom to help improve their health and well-being. . The FDA public health advisory on kratom also doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Gottlieb.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefor must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.
- I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported "comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom" referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.
- I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.

I respectfully request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices on their personal kratom regimen for improving health and well-being.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You will read all of me 40 times. This is an inescapable destiny. I believe that god blesses us with master miracles.
Date: Monday, December 04, 2017 10:49:21 PM

December 4, 2017

Dear FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

The FDA has A public health obligation to behave in way that improves public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be crystal clear. The FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers that use kratom to help manage our health and well-being. The FDA kratom public health advisory is personally harmful to the health and well-being of myself because I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer, and I have been for about A half decade. The FDA public health advisory on kratom also doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Gottlieb.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory because it doesn't

meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefor must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.
- I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported "comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom" referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.
- I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.

I respectfully request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make informed choices on their personal regimen for their health and well-being.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: You will read me 40 times. This is an inescapable fate. God blesses us with master miraculous unconditional love.
Date: Saturday, December 09, 2017 12:20:57 AM

December 8, 2017

Dear Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

Kratom is masterfully safe. NSAIDs kill about 16,500 people annually in the United States alone, and at least 106,000 Americans are hospitalized for GI complications that often include bleeding. This estimate was published in A 1999 observational study evaluating data from the Arthritis, Rheumatism, and Aging Medical Information System (ARAMIS) for evaluating NSAID harm in the United States. That is my superior choice quality source for proving the deaths and dangers that NSAIDs can have. The FDA approves of NSAID products. That is A fact.

Prescription drugs kill Americans. Moore and other researchers seeking to quantify how many people die annually from taking prescribed drugs. Often by closely evaluating hospital admission studies. Estimates dating back nearly two decades put the number at 100,000 or more deaths annually. Which includes A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 1998 that projected 106,000 deaths. A more recent analysis estimates 128,000 Americans die each year as A result of taking medications as prescribed. That number is nearly five times the number of people killed overdosing on prescription painkillers and heroin.

It is estimated that 80,000 Americans die from Alcohol annually. I am sourcing <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm> as my source. Keep in mind it is the Center for Disease Control and it is A part of the United States government. I believe the Center for Disease Control is A high quality source for proving the alcohol deaths in this instance. Alcoholic products are FDA approved. This proves the FDA is willing to give responsible adults sovereignty over alcoholic products

Worst of all is tobacco killing about 6 million tobacco users annually, and another 890000

more people because of second hand smoke annually. The FDA approves tobacco products. This proves the FDA gives adults sovereignty as it relates to tobacco products I am sourcing the World Health Organization for information to prove the deaths I mentioned caused by tobacco. I believe it to be A great reputable source <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs339/en/>.

The point I'm getting at here is Kratom is extremely safe compared to those legal NSAIDs, alcohol, prescribed drugs, and tobacco that pass FDA regulations and are approved by the FDA. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD has said, "kratom has A remarkably safety record with low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans." The Comprehensive Pinney Associates comprehensive 8 factor scientific study masterfully came to four conclusions. Kratom is well within the safety range for dietary supplements. Kratom consumption isn't harmful. Kratom's abuse liability is no greater than coffee, hops, St. John Wort, and chamomile. Kratom is masterfully good and beneficial for American society. I truly believe in the virtually non-existent cases where kratom was in somebody's system and they died it was because of the other drugs in their system or life threatening diseases they had. Dr. Sawyer PhD, A world renowned master Toxicologist reviewed the deaths up until September 2016 and his conclusion was that not one of the deaths could be attributed to kratom. I agree with Dr. Sawyer PhD and Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD. I believe that no deaths can attributed to kratom. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD said, "With respect to deaths, we have yet to document A single death that can be concluded with reason to be A kratom overdose death or A poisoning death." Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD believes that no deaths can be attributed to kratom. Please watch the AKA Press Conference <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDAm1alPWS4>. That is the link to the AKA Press Conference. The Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD quote about no deaths could be attributed to kratom is in the AKA Press Conference. You can watch it yourself just please use the link. The FDA approves of products that have causes immense death as proven by the first four paragraphs of this formal letter. The FDA approves of NSAIDs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco even though these products have been proven to be deadly in some cases by the first four paragraphs of this formal letter. The FDA approves of tobacco. Tobacco is A product that if used as directed will kill you eventually. The FDA is basically approving of poison as it relates to the FDA and tobacco. Given that the FDA approves of toxic tobacco products. As well as potentially deadly NSAIDs, prescription drugs, and alcohol. I have an absolute right to make to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of my own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

The FDA has A public health obligation to behave in way that improves public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only

disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be crystal clear. The FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers that use kratom to help manage our health and well-being. The FDA kratom public health advisory is personally harmful to the health and well-being of myself because I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer, and I have been for about A half decade. The FDA public health advisory on kratom also doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.

- I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported “comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom” referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.
- I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefor must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner.FDA](#)
Subject: #Godguaranteeskratomisthemostextremelyperfectlysafeandharmlessbotanicalfood!
#Godguaranteeskratomunconditionallybeextremelyperfectlysafeharmlesslegalandperfectlyaccessibletoallunconditionallyasitrelatestoallthatisortheentireomnipresentbodyofgod!
Date: Friday, February 09, 2018 4:51:25 AM

Dear FDA,

God guarantees that Kratom is the most extremely perfectly safe and harmless botanical food out of all that is! The FDA's most super extremely perfect and important purpose in life is to Rescind the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory, Rescind the FDA Kratom Import Alerts, and extremely perfectly guarantee that Kratom unconditionally be extremely perfectly legal, and accessible for everyone unconditionally as it relates to all that is or the entire omnipresent body of God!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #keepkratomandcannabislegal #kratomandcannabisareperfectlysafeandharmless
#kratomandcannabisperfectlymiraculouslysafelives!
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 1:03:34 AM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

I am A libertarian, and I always believed very omnipotently in liberty for all when I pledge allegiance to the American Flag. Values that the land of the free United States was founded on! There are two Botanical Foods Cannabis and Kratom, and they both are the most extremely safe and harmless Food you can consume out of all that is. I know this to be A perfect fact because I have consumed Cannabis and Kratom for over 6 years. Cannabis and Kratom are perfectly legal in my State. Cannabis and Kratom have perfectly divinely miraculously improves my health, well-being, and quality of life on A physical, mental, and spiritual level unconditionally! The FDA needs to do everything in their power to guarantee that Cannabis and Kratom are perfectly legal so that those Botanical Foods can continue to improve public health and well-being just exactly like how Kratom and Cannabis has improved my life! Kratom and Cannabis are the most extremely harmless Botanical Foods out of all that is! Rescind the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory, Rescind the FDA Kratom import alerts, Rescind the Kratom and Cannabis State and Federal Bans! Kratom and Cannabis are perfect miracle plants!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #keepkratomandcannabissaveslives #keepkratomandcannabislegal
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2018 1:46:13 AM

Dear Extremely Perfect Healer Elected Representatives,

Kratom is the most extremely perfectly divine safe and harmless botanical food out of all that is! Kratom has extremely perfectly divinely and therapeutically improved my health, well-being, and quality of life on A physical, mental, and spiritual level! Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately and because the misinformation in the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts have been perfectly refuted by A comprehensive 8-factor analysis that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Healer God!

??/???

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #Keepkratomlegal! #Kratomsaveslives!
Date: Monday, February 05, 2018 11:39:25 PM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

I have consumed Kratom for over A half decade. I eat this Botanical food to extremely perfectly improve health, well-being, and quality of life! I perfectly believe that Kratom is the most extremely perfectly safe Food any life out of all that is could consume. I believe perfectly omnipotently that In the United States there is Liberty for all just like when we pledge allegiance to the flag! I am A perfect libertarian. I believe that every adult should be able to consume any food or drug out of all that is, and that should be perfectly legal to do so unconditionally! I believe the war on drugs is A failure and A waste of money! Botanical foods such as Kratom, Cannabis, etc should be legal and available to every adult so they can Kratom or Cannabis regimens to perfectly improve health, well-being, and quality of life. The FDA has to do everything in the FDA's power to make sure that Botanicals such as Cannabis, Kratom, etc are extremely perfectly legal and available to the Public! I can honestly say that Kratom and Cannabis has perfectly improved the quality of my life divinely! Rescind the FDA kratom public health advisory and the FDA Kratom import alerts! Kratom and Cannabis is A gift that god gave to us to perfectly improve health, well-being, and quality of life! I believe that is perfectly beneficial to Humanity and should stay perfectly legal and available for all Adults!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisareextremelyperfectmiraclegodhealerplants!
#guaranteekratomandcannabisareextremelyperfectlylegalandaccessibleforeveryone!
Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2018 8:51:40 PM

Dear Extremely Perfect Healers FDA,

God will keep psychedelics kratom and cannabis extremely perfectly legal extremely perfectly unscheduled substances and extremely perfectly accessible for everyone! God gave us this extremely perfect master miraculous God Healing extremely perfect true God Healer blessing superior to anything else from past present or future! It is Extremely Perfect God's Will and God's Will is Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Inescapable Extremely Perfect Destiny God Unconditionally!

Extremely Perfectly,

Extremely Omnipotent God

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisareextremelyperfecttherapeuticgodhealingmiracles
#kratomandcannabisareguaranteedtobeextremelyperfectlylegalunscheduledsubstancesandextremelyperfectlyaccessibleforeveryoneguaranteedbyahigherpowerGOD
Date: Sunday, February 18, 2018 9:37:54 PM

Dear Extremely Perfect FDA,

The FDA better and is guaranteed to Rescind the FDA misinformation in the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory, all FDA Kratom Misinformation, Rescind the Kratom Import Alerts, Rescind the United States State Kratom Bans, Rescind the United State City Kratom Bans! I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom consummation regimens as A part of their own personal regimen for extremely perfectly master miraculously divinely therapeutically improving and healing health, well-being, and quality of life on A Extremely Perfect Physical, Extremely Perfect Sexual, Extremely Perfect Mental, and Extremely Perfect Spiritual Level and that applies to all that is or A better way to say it is the Entire Omnipresent Body of God and Goddess!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisareGod"sperfectgiftblessings
#guaranteekratomandcannabisareperfectlylegalandaccessibleforeveryone unconditionally
#kratomandcannabisarethemostextremelyperfectlysafeandharmlessbotanicalfood
#kratomandcannabisareGod"sperfectmiracleheale...
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 10:50:16 PM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

Kratom and Cannabis are the most extremely perfectly divine safe and harmless botanical food out of all that is! Kratom and Cannabis have extremely perfectly divinely and therapeutically improved my health, well-being, and quality of life on A physical, mental, and spiritual level, and millions of other Americans have had the exact same benefits from Cannabis and Kratom as me! I believe very omnipotently that in the land of the free United States where is liberty for all when we pledge allegiance to the United States Flag that every Adults should have access to perfectly safe, harmless, legal, and easily accessible Kratom and Cannabis so that we can continue to extremely perfectly divinely therapeutically improve health, well-being, and quality of life! I am A libertarian, and that sacred freedom to consume any Botanical that God gave me is my god given freedom and birthright! Please rescind, review, and correct the Kratom State bans, Kratom City Bans, Perfectly legalize Cannabis and make is perfectly easily accessible for everyone unconditionally in A divine perfect way, FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately and because the misinformation in the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts have been perfectly refuted by A comprehensive 8-factor analysis that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisareextremelyperfectlysafelandharmlessextremelyperfectmastermiraculoustherapeuticGodHealers
#kratomandcannabisareextremelyperfectlyguaranteedtobeextremelyperfectlylegalunscheduledsubstanceandextremelyperfectlyaccessibleforeveryone
Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2018 12:33:00 AM

Dear Extremely Perfect Divine Healers FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

The FDA for years has been extremely irresponsible with false, inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated information about A 100% Natural,Extremely Safe, and Extremely Harmless Botanical Food called Kratom or Mitragyna Speciosa. Kratom and Cannabis for Trillions of Lives and More are guaranteed to extremely perfectly master miraculously divinely extremely perfectly God Heal Trillions of Lives and more guaranteed by Extremely Safe and Harmless Kratom God and Cannabis God's Extremely Perfect Miracle God Extremely Perfect Miracle Healing Powers! Everyone has been born with extremely perfect sovereignty over our Entheogen God Consummation Regimens to Extremely Perfectly improve and God Heal health, well-being, and quality of life! It is the FDA's, CDC's, DEA's, DOJ's, all Elected Representatives, all Politicians, and everything else out of all that is or we could say the entire omnipresent body of God's Extremely Perfect Duty, Obligation, Extremely Perfect Obligation, and Most Extremely Perfect and Sole one and only reason of existing (Extremely Perfect Life Purpose) To Extremely Perfectly Guarantee that the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory be Rescinded, The FDA Kratom Import Alerts be Rescinded, The Kratom State Bans be Rescinded, The Kratom City Bans be Rescinded, and that that Cannabis be extremely perfectly legal, unscheduled 100% Botanical substance, and Extremely Perfectly Accessible for everyone!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent God

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: #kratomandcannabisbethemostextremelyperfectmastermiraclehealinggodplants
#guaranteedtokeepkratomandcannabisextremelyperfectlysafeharmlesslegalandaccessibleforallthatisorwecouldsaythentireomnipresentbodyofgod
Date: Saturday, February 10, 2018 9:17:55 PM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

I am going to give you A list of extremely perfect master miraculous keep kratom and cannabis extremely perfectly master miraculous legal, unscheduled substance, and accessible to all that is as it relates to the entire body of God unconditionally advocates. They are going to sign their name on this letter to extremely perfectly master miraculous guarantee that Kratom and Cannabis be legal, unscheduled substance, and accessible to all that is as it relates to the entire body of God unconditionally. They are signing their name to show their perfect approval of my letters and to improve my letters similar to how A petition to the government that has A lot of signatures is better my Letters are better to because of perfect people that sign their name on my Letters. (b) (6) A perfectly good friend and kratom consumer, (b) (6) kratom consumer Creator of the American Kratom Association, (b) (6) kratom consumer and creator of Documentary Movies, (b) (6) Professional Comedian kratom and cannabis consumer and Hardcore Advocate for unconditionally keeping kratom and cannabis perfectly legal to all that is unconditionally, (b) (6) kratom consumer and my mother, (b) (6) my sister, (b) (6) my father, (b) (6) A perfectly good friend of mine and kratom consumer, (b) (6) A perfectly good friend and kratom consumer, Travis Lowin Executive Director Top Alpha of the Botanical Educational Alliance A good friend, Dave Herman Top Alpha Leader God of the American Kratom Association, Angela Watson Top Alpha Goddess Mistress leader of the Botanical Educational Alliance, (b) (6)

(b) (6) Pete Candland American Kratom Associate Chief Lobbyist, Mac Haddow American Kratom Associate Chief Lobbyist, and all of the many millions and more lives that have been extremely perfectly master miraculously improved health, well-being, and quality of life on the physical, mental, and spiritual level, and that includes all of the many millions and more extremely perfect master miraculous perfect kratom farmers, extremely perfect master miraculous kratom business men, and extremely perfect master miraculous kratom consumers!

Please share this Letter with everyone you can in the FDA, CDC, and DEA. For well over thousands of years Kratom and Cannabis have extremely perfectly master miraculously improved the health, well-being, and quality of life on A physical, mental, and spiritual level of billions if not more than billions of lives including my own! Kratom and Cannabis are the most extremely perfectly master miraculously best health wellness healing safe and harmless Botanical Foods! The Kratom and Cannabis I consume are never drugs unconditionally! The Kratom and Cannabis I consume are foods! In the Land of the Free United States where we pledge allegiance to the Flag to guarantee Liberty and Freedom for all the Government has no right to make Kratom or Cannabis A crime. I would be extremely perfectly miraculously angry and frustrated with A government if Cannabis and/or Kratom became A crime, and also my health, well-being, and quality of life would definitely be of A lower quality if Cannabis and/or Kratom was A Crime! The FDA has an obligation to protect and Promote My Health, it even says so on the official FDA website, and that means the FDA has an Obligation to guarantee that cannabis and kratom be unconditionally an extremely perfectly legal, unscheduled substance, and perfectly accessible for everyone as it relates to all that is or the entire body of God! To not guarantee what I asked of you would be failing to protect and promote my health which is the FDA slogan on the official FDA website! The FDA will perfectly improve my health and well-being! The FDA's most extremely perfectly important perfect life purpose is to guarantee that Kratom and Cannabis be extremely perfectly miraculously legal, unscheduled substances, and perfectly accessible for all that is as it relates to the entire body of God! The FDA will Rescind the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory, FDA Kratom Import Alerts, and Rescind Kratom state bans, Rescind Kratom city bans! Kratom and Cannabis are extremely perfect miracle plants that extremely perfectly miraculously improve health, well-being, and quality of life

on A physical, mental, and spiritual level, and I work extremely perfectly hard to guarantee that these extremely perfect miraculous healing plants such as Cannabis and Kratom are perfectly legal and accessible for everyone so that I can guarantee more people and lives are and will be extremely perfectly miraculously improved health, well-being, and quality of life, on A physical, mental, and spiritual level!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisextremelyperfectmiraclegodhealingplants
#guaranteethatkratomandcannabisbelegalunscheduledsubstancesperfectlyaccessibleforeveryoneunconditionally!
Date: Saturday, February 17, 2018 9:04:32 PM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

Share this message with everyone you can in the FDA, DOJ, CDC, and DEA! I am A long-term extremely perfect master miracle healing consumer of Kratom and Cannabis botanical food! Kratom and Cannabis for Billions of Lives including my own, members of my family, and perfect friend of mine are guaranteed to extremely perfectly master miraculously divinely therapeutically improve and heal health, well-being, and quality of life on A perfect physical, perfect mental, perfect sexual, and perfect spiritual level and that applies to all that is or A better way to say it is to the entire omnipresent body of God! The FDA's one and only life purpose, mission, reason for living is to guarantee that Kratom, Cannabis, and psychedelics (Psilocybin Golden Teacher Mushrooms, DMT, ayahuasca) are extremely perfectly legal, unscheduled substances, and extremely perfectly accessible for everyone. The FDA, DOJ, DEA, CDC, and all Extremely Perfect Elected Representatives and everything else that is or we could say the entire omnipresent body of God is guaranteed to rescind the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory, perfectly guaranteed to perfectly rescind the FDA Kratom Import Alerts, perfectly guaranteed to Rescind the Kratom State bans in the US, perfectly guaranteed to Rescind the Kratom City Bans in the US, and perfectly guarantee that Cannabis isn't A scheduled controlled substance on A Federal, State, City, or County Level! I believe it God's extremely perfect infinitely omnipotent master God will that everything in this message and that Kratom, Cannabis, and Psychedelics (Psilocybin Golden Teacher Mushrooms, Ayahuasca, DMT) is unconditionally guaranteed to be unconditionally perfectly legal, perfectly unscheduled substance, and extremely perfectly accessible to all that is and that is Infinitely Perfect and Omnipotent God's Inescapable Will, inescapable Destiny, and God's Extremely Omnipotent Inescapable Truth, and God's extremely perfect infinitely omnipotent inescapable God Destiny Truth!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisgod"smiraclehealingblessing #kratomandcannabissavedmylife
#keepkratomandcannabislegalunconditionally
Date: Thursday, February 15, 2018 12:04:48 AM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

Kratom and Cannabis are the most extremely perfectly safe and harmless ready to eat God miracle divine healing foods! Kratom and Cannabis are extremely perfect master miracle divine healing plants that improve, perfect, and heal health, and well-being on the physical, mental, sexual, and spiritual level. Billions of Kratom and Cannabis Consumers are extremely perfectly master miraculously divinely healing themselves, and Kratom and Cannabis Consumers are improving, perfecting, and healing their health and well-being on A physical, mental, sexual, and spiritual level in A extremely perfectly miraculously safe and harmless way using Kratom and Cannabis! Kratom and Cannabis are the most extremely perfect master miraculous best health wellness healing safe and harmless botanical foods! The FDA has an obligation to guarantee that Kratom and Cannabis be extremely perfectly legal, unscheduled substance, and extremely perfectly available to everyone unconditionally as it relates to the entire omnipresent body of God! everyone that reads this message you will devote your entire life to guarantee that FDA Kratom public health advisory is rescinded, the FDA Kratom import alerts are rescinded, the Kratom state bans are rescinded, the kratom city bans are rescinded, you will guarantee that cannabis be an unscheduled substance, guarantee that extremely perfect miracle Cannabis God is extremely perfectly legal and accessible to all that is or we could say the entire omnipresent body of God and your devotion to guarantee you do everything I tell you to do is extremely perfectly master miraculously healing guaranteed and inescapable fate! I believe it is God's extremely perfect master miraculous healing infinitely omnipotent Will, and God's Will is extremely perfectly master miraculous healing infinitely omnipotent inescapable fate and destiny!

Perfectly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisimproveandhealqualityoflife #guaranteetokeepkratomandcannabisperfectlylegal
Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2018 12:49:03 AM

Dear Extremely Perfect FDA Healers Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

For A lot of Billions of Lives and more myself included Kratom and Cannabis have extremely perfectly Extremely Master Miraculously Extremely Perfectly Therapeutically Improved and Healed my Extremely Perfect Health, my Extremely Perfect Well-being, and my Extremely Perfect Quality of Life! Everyone is extremely perfectly unconditionally guaranteeing that FDA Kratom Public Health Advisory gets Rescinded guaranteed unconditionally, The FDA Kratom Import Alert get Rescinded guaranteed unconditionally, The Kratom State Bans Gets Rescinded guaranteed unconditionally, The Kratom City Bans gets Rescinded guaranteed unconditionally, and that Cannabis is extremely perfectly legal guaranteed unconditionally, That Cannabis Is extremely perfectly unscheduled substances guaranteed unconditionally, and That Cannabis is extremely perfectly easily accessible for everyone! God will keep psychedelics kratom and cannabis extremely perfectly legal extremely perfectly unscheduled substances and extremely perfectly accessible for everyone! God gave us this extremely perfect master miraculous God Healing extremely perfect true God Healer blessing superior to anything else from past present or future! It is Extremely Perfect God's Will and God's Will is Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Inescapable Extremely Perfect Destiny God Unconditionally!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Healer God!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabisperfectlyheallives #keepkratomandcannabisperfectlylegalandavailable
Date: Saturday, February 24, 2018 12:48:34 AM

Dear Extremely Perfect FDA Healers,

For A lot of Billions of Lives and more myself included Kratom and Cannabis have extremely perfectly Extremely Master Miraculously Extremely Perfectly Therapeuticly Improved and Healed my Extremely Perfect Health, my Extremely Perfect Well-being, and my Extremely Perfect Quality Of Life! It is everything out of all that is or we could say the entire omnipresent body of God's or Goddess's are extremely perfectly guaranteed to and the FDA, CDC, DEA, DOJ, and more are extremely perfectly included in everyone as I previously said to guarantee That Kratom and Cannabis be Extremely Perfectly Legal, Extremely Perfectly Unscheduled Substances, and Extremely Perfectly Available for Everyone!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Healer God

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabissavelives #guaranteedtokeepkratomandcannabisperfectlylegalandaccessibletoall
Date: Saturday, February 24, 2018 8:08:27 PM

Dear Extremely Perfect FDA Healers,

For A lot of Billions of Lives and more myself included Kratom and Cannabis have extremely perfectly Extremely Master Miraculously Extremely Perfectly Therapeutically Improved and Healed my Extremely Perfect Health, my Extremely Perfect Well-being, and my Extremely Perfect Quality Of Life! The CDC, DEA, DOJ, All elected representatives, the entire omnipresent body of Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Healer God, and FDA are guaranteed Rescind the FDA Kratom Public Health Advisories, The FDA Kratom Import Alerts, Rescind the Kratom City Bans, Rescind the Kratom State Bans, and Guarantee that Kratom God and Cannabis God be extremely Perfectly Legal, Extremely Perfectly Unscheduled Substance, and Extremely Perfectly Accessible for everyone!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Perfect Extremely Omnipotent Healer God

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomandcannabissavelives #keepkratomandcannabisextremelyperfectlylegalandavailableforall
Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2018 2:04:18 AM

Dear Extremely Perfect Healers FDA,

God will keep psychedelics kratom and cannabis legal unscheduled and accessible for everyone!
God gave us this beyond ultimate master miraculous truth blessing superior to anything else from
past present or future! It is God's Will and God's Will is Perfect Omnipotent Inescapable
Unconditionally!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Omnipotent God

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomthemostextremelyperfectlysafebotanicalfood
#godhasguaranteedkratombeaextremelyperfectlylegalandaccessiblebotanicalfoodforallunconditionallyasitrelatestoallthatisorwecouldsaytheentireomnipresentbodyofgod
Date: Friday, February 09, 2018 4:14:11 AM

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

God gave us Cannabis and Kratom as A perfect blessing so that we can perfectly safely and harmlessly extremely perfectly improve our health, well-being, and quality of life perfectly, and God is extremely omnipotently perfectly omnipotently adamant that kratom and cannabis are guaranteed to be extremely perfectly safe, harmless, legal, and perfectly legal, and extremely perfectly accessible to all that is as it relates to the whole body of God! God will keep kratom and cannabis legal unscheduled and accessible for everyone! God gave us this beyond ultimate master miraculous truth blessing superior to anything else from past present or future! It is God's Will and God's Will is Perfect Omnipotent Inescapable Unconditionally!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: #kratomthemostextremelyperfectlysafebotanicalfood
#godhasguaranteedkratombeextremelyperfectlylegalandaccessiblebotanicalfoodforallunconditionallyasitrelatestoallthatisorwecouldsaytheentireomn
Date: Friday, February 16, 2018 1:00:37 AM

February 16, 2018

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

Ever since I started consuming kratom the quality of my life has exponentially been better and more perfect. I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful success to help improve my health, well-being, and improve my quality of my life. In the Holy Bible it says the Kratom Tree's leaves are for healing. I believe that Kratom is A gift from God. Kratom isn't A treatment or A cure for anything at this time as A dietary supplement, but it undeniable that kratom is miraculously and perfectly improving lives! Kratom plays an important, valuable, and beneficial role in making me A better productive, contributing master member of society, and kratom plays an important role in making me A better master of American citizenship. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign choices about my own personal kratom regimen to improve my health and well-being.

I have been in contact with my elected legislators and elected representatives to get the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts rescinded, masterfully improved upon, and perfectly corrected. One letter, written by Reps. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Dave Brat (R-Va.) and addressed to the Food and Drug Administration, describes kratom as a tool to help fight the opioid epidemic and says the agency has shown "insufficient" evidence to warrant any official warning or action against kratom. Reps. Jared Polis says "kratom and cannabis should be legal and available to everyone because kratom and cannabis are perfectly beneficial for perfectly improving health, well-being, and quality of life and kratom and cannabis have perfectly divinely improved and saved many millions of lives in the United States alone!" Jared Polis says, "kratom and cannabis are the most extremely perfectly safe and harmless botanical foods out of all that is, and that it is God's Will that kratom and cannabis are guaranteed to stay perfectly legal and accessible for everyone, and God's is the most extremely perfect omnipotently divine inescapable guaranteed fate unconditionally!"

The FDA has A public health obligation to behave in way that improves public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be crystal clear. The FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers that use kratom to help manage our health and well-being. The FDA kratom public health advisory is personally harmful to the health and well-being of myself because I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer, and I have been for about A half decade. The FDA kratom public health advisory also doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive and masterful 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding

kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately and because the misinformation in the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts have been perfectly refuted by A comprehensive 8-factor analysis that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.
- I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported "comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom" referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.
- I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

Perfectly,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: #kratomthemostextremelyperfectlysafebotanicalfood
#godhasguaranteedkratombeaextremelyperfectlylegalandaccessiblebotanicalfoodforallunconditionallyasitrelatestoallthatisorwecouldsaythentireomnipresentbodyofgod!
Date: Friday, February 09, 2018 3:59:04 AM

February 9, 2018

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb MD,

Ever since I started consuming kratom the quality of my life has exponentially been better and more perfect. I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful success to help improve my health, well-being, and improve my quality of my life. In the Holy Bible it says the Kratom Tree's leaves are for healing. I believe that Kratom is A gift from God. Kratom isn't A treatment or A cure for anything at this time as A dietary supplement, but it undeniable that kratom is miraculously and perfectly improving lives! Kratom plays an important, valuable, and beneficial role in making me A better productive, contributing master member of society, and kratom plays an important role in making me A better master of American citizenship. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign choices about my own personal kratom regimen to improve my health and well-being.

I have been in contact with my elected legislators and elected representatives to get the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts rescinded, masterfully improved upon, and perfectly corrected. One letter, written by Reps. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Dave Brat (R-Va.) and addressed to the Food and Drug Administration, describes kratom as a tool to help fight the opioid epidemic and says the agency has shown "insufficient" evidence to warrant any official warning or action against kratom. Reps. Jared Polis says "kratom and cannabis should be legal and available to everyone because kratom and cannabis are perfectly beneficial for perfectly improving health, well-being, and quality of life and kratom and cannabis have perfectly divinely improved and saved many millions of lives in the United States alone!" Jared Polis says, "kratom and cannabis are the most extremely perfectly safe and harmless botanical foods out of all that is, and that it is God's Will that kratom and cannabis are guaranteed to stay perfectly legal and accessible for everyone, and God's is the most extremely perfect omnipotently divine inescapable guaranteed fate unconditionally!"

The FDA has A public health obligation to behave in way that improves public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be crystal clear. The FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers that use kratom to help manage our health and well-being. The FDA kratom public health advisory is personally harmful to the health and well-being of myself because I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer, and I have been for about A half decade. The FDA kratom public health advisory also doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive and masterful 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of

information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately and because the misinformation in the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts have been perfectly refuted by A comprehensive 8-factor analysis that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.
- I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported "comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom" referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.
- I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: A note for you.
Date: Thursday, February 22, 2018 5:52:51 PM

Hello Commisioner,

My name is (b) (6) and I would like to let you know that your recent move to classify Kratom (*mitragina speciosa*) as an opiate is not only incorrect, it's also backwards (has prohibition ever worked, sir?) and immoral (to outlaw a plant, something God made—how dare you?).

Kratom helps me immensely, with many issues, and I like being able to use it periodically as needed—please don't make the moves to make it illegal.

I know you're tempted to sell-out to pharmaceutical companies, but I urge you to consider doing the right thing.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Death directly attributed to kratom
Date: Tuesday, January 09, 2018 1:50:12 PM

Good afternoon, once again there are rumors circulation about deaths directly from the use of kratom...this is the furthest from the truth! After reading all the toxology reports, there isn't one single case which is tied directly to kratom use! The FDA and DEA are waging war against a God-given natural plant that is NO more dangerous than a cup of coffee(cousins). The government should be ashamed of itself for aligning with "big pharma". Shame on you for insulting millions of kratom advocates that have discovered an excellent quality of life without opioids and narcotic pain medications! You could utilize your time and efforts toward a war on fentanyl and the opioid epidemic instead...don't you think?? Thank you for taking the time to read my email...sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

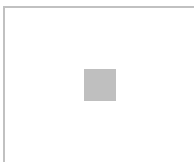
From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: For Your Consideration
Date: Monday, January 15, 2018 5:04:51 PM

Commissioner Gotlieb,

I am a 35 year old chronic pain patient and I have found kratom to be a safe alternative to narcotics. Taking nothing is simply not an option for those like me who suffer on a daily basis. Before I was completely dependent on Vicodin, which I had to take because otherwise I couldn't work or sleep. Kratom is the only thing that I am able to use that helps with the pain in a similar way, but with much less severe side effects. I have been taking it almost every day for 3 years and the difference in my health, mood, and overall outlook on life is amazing. It makes me feel normal again. People in a similar situation as me have been dealt a bad hand in life and live with pain every day. I don't understand why people keep trying to ban kratom and do something that harms us after we have finally found some relief. It needs to be regulated, not locked away. I cannot go back to the way things were before and it's not fair for anyone to tell me what I can and cannot use if I find that it helps me. I understand that you do not want kids taking this and having it sold in gas stations mixed with other things is not good for anyone. There has to be a middle ground.

As you are aware, we are in the midst of an opiate crisis in this country and banning something that helps people get off of opiates makes absolutely no sense. It is an off-ramp, not an on-ramp. I know there are articles out there that say it is deadly and addictive, but these are simply not true and have no scientific proof to back them. If you do nothing else, please read the [8-Factor Analysis by Pinney Associates](#) that was completed last year. It was convincing enough to halt the DEA from making it illegal and proves how useful it is, and could be for people in this country. Yes, more studies need to be done, but banning it will make this impossible to do. Please think of people like me when you make your decision. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Help please keep Kratom Lega
Date: Sunday, February 11, 2018 9:00:13 AM
Attachments: [My name is \(b\) \(6\).docx](#)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

My name is (b) (6), I live at (b) (6). My cell phone is (b) (6). I am 51 years old and have been married for 30 years.

I am writing asking you to help with stopping the FDA's push to make Kratom illegal. I understand the FDA's concern for the health of our nation and I am appreciative of their efforts to stop harmful substances from being available to people.

I am a wife, mom, and educator who has struggled with fibromyalgia for over ten years. I literally became bed ridden at one point because the pain and fatigue of fibromyalgia became so severe. I was put on hydrocodone to help my pain, and not only was it NOT very effective, I did not want to become addicted to it, so I stopped taking it. I would have had to take more than I was prescribed to get relief, and I was not willing to do that. I also suffered from the side effects of the fibromyalgia medicine I was prescribed. I was finding that the more I went back to the doctor, the more medications they were wanting to put me on, with more horrible side effects to deal with.

Going to a chiropractor, eating a much more strict, healthy diet, and incorporating exercise into my lifestyle improved my health in several ways, and helped get me out of the bedridden state I had been in but the pain and fatigue of fibromyalgia were still a big issue and were preventing me from holding down a job. The illness still reduced my quality of life; it hindered my ability to socialize, volunteer at church, and live the full and active life I once enjoyed. It also impacted my family financially, because it prevented me from working.

Comment [MR1]:

Simply put, my life was on hold for years because of chronic pain and illness, and it made life very, very rough for me and my family. It put a serious strain on my marriage. My husband became a caretaker for me on top of having to be the sole provider for our family. At one point we were in fear of having to sell our home to move to something smaller to be able to continue affording ways to get me healthy again. Everyone in the family is affected by one member's chronic illness.

Thank God, one day in my search on the internet I came across the American Kratom Association's website. I began reading testimonials about other individuals just like me who suffered from chronic pain, and how they were finding great and effective pain relief from this plant.

So, I started taking naturally occurring, plant-based kratom to relieve my pain, taking small doses as recommended by the website, and for the first time in ten years, I had relief from the pain and felt wonderfully normal!!! When you have suffered with chronic pain for so long, feeling normal is amazing! You have more energy and your ability to concentrate improves, because pain isn't draining and distracting you. After starting kratom, I realized I could go back to work full time! I am now working full time in the classroom for the first time in a decade. Without kratom, I would not be able to work full time. The pain and fatigue would be too much.

It has been over a year since I began taking Kratom. I take 1-3 small doses daily as needed for pain. There is no "high", just very effective pain relief, and like coffee it gives a little energy boost. It has given me my life back! I have skipped a day here and there and not felt any kind of withdrawal. Though some experience constipation as a side effect, I experience no side effects. If I skip a dose or two on days when the pain is lower, I feel no ill effects at all.

I am very careful how I take it kratom, treating it as seriously as I would a prescribed medicine or supplement. I am an educated woman and have done my research and am highly protective of my health.

Kratom is an answer to prayer for me. I don't know what I will do if it is made illegal.

My husband has suggested, if it is made illegal, that I could put in for permanent disability under social security as I would have to quit my full-time job. That is NOT what I want to have happen. Taking kratom for pain relief has allowed me to become the more productive citizen again that I desire to be.

I am concerned that the FDA's push to make kratom illegal will force me back into a lifestyle where pain and fatigue dictate my day, and where addictive opiates and medications with horrible side effects would be my only option. Why would they want to do that?

As of today, I take no more prescribed medications for fibromyalgia or pain. Do I still have some pain from my illnesses? Yes, but at least it has become much, much more manageable with the usage of kratom. Outside of Excedrin or aspirin for headaches, that's the only medication I take for pain.

It is a God-send, and for me, a miracle. My husband is no longer my caretaker and I cannot emphasize enough how it has given me back what pain stole from me from a disease that I still have; fibromyalgia.

Please help people like me to keep kratom legal!

I am willing to meet with you or anyone else in person with our government at my own expense to fly anywhere, attend any meetings, testify before Congress, the Senate or meet with the President himself to keep this plant legal.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you so much for your service to our country and to the people of the United States.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

A large grey rectangular box redacting the signature area of the letter.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I am extremely adamant that God's Will is inescapable!
Date: Thursday, January 18, 2018 11:58:22 PM

Hey Scott Gottlieb keep kratom legal and accessible for everyone unconditionally! I have given Scott Gottlieb many messages about kratom, and I truly believe Kratom improves health, well-being, and quality of life. I am extremely adamant that Kratom has to stay legal and accessible for everyone, and that is inescapable! I believe that is God's Will, and God's Will is inescapable!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: I am God"s Will, and God"s Will is inescapable!
Date: Friday, January 19, 2018 1:14:22 PM

I am extremely overpowering powerful adamant that Kratom has to stay legal and available for everyone! I am A extremely powerful uncompromising bull about this. Kratom has to stay legal and available for everyone. It is God's Will, and God's Will is inescapable!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: In support of Kratom
Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018 4:54:27 PM

I'm deeply disturbed by the apparent witch hunt the FDA and DEA have decided to pursue against Kratom. I have personal experience with this plant's life saving capabilities. I can only assume that the leadership of both the FDA and DEA have lined their pockets with kick backs from Big Pharma in their blatant attempt to curtail any decrease in the sale of the addictive opioids they peddle with impunity. I would have thought you'd be more interested in dealing with the effects of the current crisis with thousands dying weekly from opioids.

I strongly urge you to reverse your stance on banning Kratom.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: It is God's Powerful Will, and God's Powerful Will is inescapable!
Date: Saturday, January 20, 2018 2:41:39 PM

January 20, 2018

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

I truly believe that kratom improves health, well-being, and quality of life. Kratom isn't A diagnosis, treatment, or A cure for any disease, but kratom does has God's Master Miraculous benefits for those that chose to responsibly consume kratom. Kratom has to stay legal and available for everyone in all 51 states including the District of Columbia, the United States Federal Level, and in every city in every city in America to ensure kratom continues to improve lives!

I have been in communicating with my elected legislators and elected representatives to get the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts rescinded, masterfully achieve something better upon, and perfectly corrected. One letter, written by Reps. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Dave Brat (R-Va.) and addressed to the Food and Drug Administration, describes kratom as a tool to help fight the opioid epidemic and says the agency has shown "insufficient" evidence to warrant any official warning or action against kratom. Reps. Jared Polis says kratom should be legal and available to everyone because kratom is beneficial in improving health, well-being, and quality of life. Rescind the FDA kratom public health advisory, FDA kratom import alerts, and Kratom will stay legal and available for everyone unconditionally in all American Cities, American States, American Federal Law, and Globally in all the world! It is God's Extremely Overpowering Powerful Divine Adamant Will, and God's Extremely Overpowering Powering Divine Adamant Will is inescapable!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Cc: (b) (6)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Friday, January 05, 2018 2:26:03 PM

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 63 year old man from (b) (6).

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent campaign against kratom. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions, including myself, that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose and addiction.

I started using kratom after a Total Knee Replacement operation. I had complications which included an intense infection. For 4 years I was taking all different types of opiates to alleviate the pain.

A friend told me about Kratom. He said it would help get through the withdrawal symptoms of the opiates I was taking and that it would help with the pain also. Of course I did not believe him at first, but I was desperate to get off the opiates I was addicted to and which had stopped working to alleviate my pain. I tried Kratom. Too my delight I was able to get through the physical addiction within about 3 weeks without the discomfort I have seen others go through which ultimately gets them to retake the opiate to relieve the withdrawal symptoms. I also noticed during that three weeks that my pain had been reduced substantially. Since then, I have used Kratom everyday and now I have my life back. If you make Kratom illegal I will have to get back on the opiates. If that happens, my life will not be worth living. So please, please don't make this life saving drug illegal. I know many people now that take Kratom as an alternative to opiates. If you make Kratom illegal you will cause all these people to take opiates again which in turn make the opiate epidemic so much worse.

Conclusion: Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, February 06, 2018 3:45:50 PM

Sir,

I am writing you today on behalf of not only myself, but the thousand upon thousands of Kratom advocates. I understand the task at hand that you have ahead of you. The opiate crisis is out of control and must be stopped, but is taking away another plant that is truly helping people the best way to do this? We need alternatives to the pills. Suboxone is not the answer. Methadone is not the answer. My father a retired battalion chief firefighter was prescribed pain pills for his back and took them for many years due to his pain. He finally decided enough was enough and they eventually put him on suboxone. Four years later and he was still taking suboxone as he had now become addicted to that substance. It was just a synthetic alternative to the pills. He had finally had enough completely and completely came off all of it and is now managing his pain very successfully with Kratom. He is happier, healthier, and back to the father I used to have before the doctor prescribed medication. If you take this natural supplement away thousands upon thousands of people with chronic pain will be left with no other options. You will see an increase in heroin and fentanyl use as people will be desperate to stop the agony. Thousands and thousands of people are dying everyday from the pills that your FDA said were safe and effective. Thousands and thousands have turned to heroin and fentanyl as the pills are too expensive and stop working because of the legislation you gave them. You have alleged deaths due to Kratom, but if Kratom were as deadly and evil as you say, would there not be over a thousand deaths at the very least as proof like we have with the pharmaceuticals the FDA said were ok?

Please, sir, just listen and hear the people that are emailing and calling about this wonderful plant. You don't see thousands of people clambering to the phones to call and keep OxyContin available. Everyone is sick of these pharmaceuticals and want a natural alternative.

I'm a veteran of the USAF and an advocate of this supplement as it has so many beneficial properties. This is not a drug. This is not spice or bath salts. This is not used to "get high." This is a natural supplement that is being used to help our epidemic.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 4:30:34 PM

It saved my life. You don't know everything. If you want to ban something go after the painkillers.. Not s plant.

Sent via the Samsung GALAXY S® 5, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 5:06:56 PM

Why would Kratom be banned or considered to be illegal . Kratom can help so many people get off the opiates that are taking our family members from us . People!e die everyday from opiate overdose. I worked as ahead Start teacher for 20 yr. I saw so many families torn apart from pain killer addiction . Kratom is safe it can help so many if the government will allow it. Why would we want so many to diewhen there is no need. (b) (6)

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 5:57:47 PM

My name is (b) (6) and I'm a 36 year old woman from (b) (6). Kratom is a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally. The FDS puts it on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. This could prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I am a responsible adult who consumes Kratom to improve my health and well-being and I urge you to reconsider your stance and look at the science in support of kratom as well as all the testimonies of people that have and continue to use kratom for their benefits. I do not now nor have I ever had a continuous prescription for narcotics. I have used them as prescribed in times of acute necessity such as tooth extractions. They do make a person "high", but let me testify to the fact that kratom does not make someone "high". If it did, I wouldn't take it regularly either. I have pain every day as a result of my multiple chronic health issues. I have a stomach condition called Gastroparesis that causes pain among other symptoms, joint pains from suspected Ehlers Danlos, cervical spine issues causing cervical radiculopathy, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, and chronic migraines. I chose to deal with my pain without narcotic medications or a pain clinic. However, it led to a life that was filled with nothing but pain and fatigue. I had no quality of life. Until kratom tea. I discovered it while researching natural pain remedies to help alleviate my pain. I researched and decided to try it. Now I can actually tolerate my activities of daily living. I can do household chores and play with my son. I don't have to lay in bed all day crippled with pain. It's not a magical cure all and doesn't completely extinguish all symptoms, but it relieves pain very well and also helps with energy and mood. It also doesn't have the horrible side effects of many and most pharmaceuticals. I have accidentally taken too much before when first figuring out a good dosage for myself and the worst that happened was a bit of nausea and jitteriness. I'm tapering off of Neurontin, a horrible drug, because of Kratom. I hope you please take the time to research scientific peer reviewed evidence as well as listen to people who take it for their health. Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will perpetuate the already rampant opioid epidemic and lead to deaths. I know that my own quality of life will not be the same without kratom.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: kratom
Date: Thursday, February 08, 2018 9:07:41 PM

Are you kidding me? If you want to ban a substance that actually causes deaths/harm- ban alcohol. Also- why fast track drugs to patients who need them while at the same time taking away the privilege of an American to use an herb for whatever reason he/she determines ? It really makes no sense.

It is a plant.

It is 2018. We are legalizing pot while at the same time criminalizing kratom? Even if there was one death from the plant- how many deaths are caused by alcohol, cigarettes, aspirin, RX drugs? I assure you- it is more than one. No one died from smoking pot and no one died from ingesting kratom.

Furthermore- some people are actually helped by this plant more than RX drugs. Everybody is different. Some people prefer natural remedies to scripts. Some people have better results with supplements vs OTC or scripts than other people.

I certainly do not think taking away this right to a plant sounds very Republican. It is quite odd actually. My father, RIP, a physician, would be very disappointed in you and your legislation. Of course, he being a lifelong Republican believed adults are responsible for themselves. Not the government. I know the FDA enjoys playing Big Brother but have you ever considered the harm you do by doing this? Yes, physical and mental harm by taking away patients choices in their own healthcare.

From: (b) (6) @yahoo.com
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, February 08, 2018 9:46:02 AM

Dr. Gottlieb,

I cannot begin to describe the frustration and outrage I and many others feel regarding your attempts to ban M. Speciosa (Kratom). You know very well that the historical and cultural uses strongly suggest this is a fairly safe (and very EFFECTIVE) herb. Certainly more research is needed, but that is not what you intend to do is it? You want it out right banned, scheduled I, so no one can research it.


Do you realize how badly this reflects on you and your position? Whose agenda are you pursuing? It sure isn't the American public's!!! Yes, it's right no one can profit much off an herb, but a pharmaceutical drug sure would make someone a lot of profit!

What about simple over the counter acetaminophen? How many more deaths from that will happen before you ban it? And you call Kratom deadly!?!? You have got to be kidding me!

I've made my point. I've seen the potential this herb has for the welfare of many people including myself and if I have to spend my life advocating for it I certainly will!

Respectfully,

(b) (6)

From: 
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Thursday, February 08, 2018 11:23:01 PM

64,000 deaths by opioids, 88,000 from alcohol, 45,000 suicides annually in the U.S., and the FDA is concerned about fucking Kratom?!

You are a bureaucratic asshole. You can quote me.

Oh, my computer program calculated a huge degree of stupidity at the Federal level in all departments.

Too bad stupidity can't be legislated.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Verizon Wireless 4G LTE network.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Sunday, February 11, 2018 3:33:02 PM

Why should Kratom be legal? Kratom is the best alternative to addictive pharmaceutical painkillers, kratom can actually break addiction to opiates and turn lives around, kratom is a potent natural mood enhancer, the drug war is unjust, irrational, and ineffective, it's really all about the money.

The real issue here is the billions of dollars of revenue that pharmaceutical companies anticipate losing when a Western rise in kratom use knocks painkillers like OxyContin (itself a \$3 billion-dollar-a-year industry) into the wastebasket as nature outperforms toxic manmade chemicals once again. Of course, this is also the real reason that marijuana (cannabis) is also on the DEA's Schedule I list, despite the overwhelming amount of evidence that it has multiple profound medicinal properties, presents no known actual danger to human health, and the American public is overwhelmingly in favor of its legalization. The Washington Post shows that states that have legalized the medical use of marijuana have drastically lowered their prescription painkiller and anti-anxiety medication consumption rates. That's a lot of money being redirected out of corporate pockets. Now consider the fact that kratom is an even more effective painkiller and mood booster than cannabis and that it can also be used to break addiction to prescription pharmaceuticals. It's pretty easy to see why this herb is really being blacklisted.

According to the CDC approximately 300 people die every year from Tylenol, or acetaminophen! Yet they are easily bought at any pharmacy or any supermarket!

The 44 supposed Kratom deaths are not what they seem. This is a blatantly false statement, as each and every single one of these deaths where Kratom was found in the deceased's system were caused by a combination of the plant and other drugs. In reality there has never been a single verifiable death as a result of solely *mitragyna speciosa* (kratom).

It's been well known for many years that Kratom does work on the opioid receptors in our brains. Either way, what is the difference between a heroin addict using Kratom to get off heroin or using Suboxone? Or methadone? They're all opiates. So the FDA is claiming that getting off opiates using an opiate-like substance like Kratom is not a good idea yet they are encouraging rehab centers to use Suboxone and Methadone for addicts!

As a result of this war on opioids, a lot of pain patients are not getting adequate treatment for their pain. Many of them are turning to alternative treatments such as kratom to help with their pain. Instead of taking more treatments away from chronic pain patients, we ask you to let things be. Everyone deserves to have their pain treated appropriately. Thank you for your time.

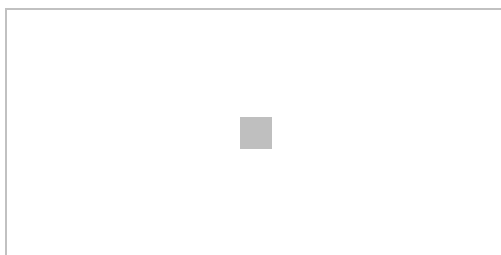
<https://www.propublica.org/article/tylenol-mcneil-fda-behind-the-numbers>

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.forbes.com/sites/davidkroll/2018/02/09/fda-weaponizes-opioid-label-against-kratom-consumers/amp/#ampshare=https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidkroll/2018/02/09/fda-weaponizes-opioid-label-against-kratom-consumers/>

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and how it changed my life
Date: Monday, January 01, 2018 2:35:26 AM

My name is (b) (6) and I am a 34 year old male that is employed as a project manager for an IT firm based out of (b) (6). Recently I have been somewhat alarmed that the herbal supplement, Kratom, has come under attack. I was diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis back in 2004, it is a condition that has no known cure and is auto-immune related. I suffer from spinal and ligament fusion that makes day to day life extremely trying without pain management. I was prescribed Norco and Tramadol for several years but they were interfering with my mental acuity and hindering my mood and ability (as a single parent) to father my son. I quit both of those narcotics and sought a different means of pain management. I tried physical therapy, many supplements, meditation...etc....nothing made it any easier to get out of bed, nothing made it easier to live my life on a day to day basis...until I found Kratom. I have had 11 kidney stones in the past 3 years from the calcium buildup in my system, and without Kratom I probably would have given up. It pushes the pain into the background while sharpening my mind enough to ignore the intense pain I suffer regularly. I can work normal hours and I am convinced it keeps me off of disability. Without it I fear that my son's future will not be as keen, and my life quality will alter drastically and irreversibly (for the worse). I do not want to go back to using FDA approved narcotics that are proven to ruin lives. I have been down that path and it is not the right way to solve pain management. Kratom has improved the life of my family immeasurably. Scheduling Kratom would ruin millions of lives and I'm certain many Kratom users would turn to illegal narcotics in the absence of good healthcare and a non-lethal solution. Tylenol kills over 150 people every year (article linked https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/24/tylenol-overdose_n_3976991.html)....36 people were found to have died with Kratom (and illicit narcotics that were not Kratom) in their systems in the past few years. I see a larger issue with medicines you approve, rather than an herbal supplement that is saving American's lives by the 10's of thousands.



Tylenol Overdose Risk Is Staggering; Acetaminophen ...

www.huffingtonpost.com

Not only is acetaminophen, the active ingredient in Tylenol, the deadliest over-the-counter pain reliever on the U.S. market, but its dangers are being o...

I appreciate your time reading this and hope I have helped sway your pending decision in the favor of keeping Kratom legal. It has saved my life, let it save other's lives as well.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom and the Opioid Problem
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 2:51:03 PM

Commissioner Dr. Gottlieb,

Earlier I wrote to talk about Kratom and my story. Felt that I did not go further into the benefits I have sustained in taking this herb and the solution that I have. I'm currently working on a solution for all controlled substances. I've invented a device that would be given to patients that who take controlled substances thru a pharmacy or doctor. The device is a (b) (4)

Due to these prescriptions having the potential for abuse. The device is (b) (4)

The main problem with controlled substances is diversion of medication to people who do not require and allows for a level of monitoring thru state officials and doctors alike. Would like to talk with you more on my ideas and how I can help. Now I would like to talk with you about how Kratom is a herb that has potential to help the Opioid Problem. Kratom as you well stated binds to the Mu Opioid receptors in our bodies which I don't deny and completely agree with. However they do it in a way that is unlike traditional opioids. From taking opioids for the better half of the last twenty years I feel that I have a better understanding on medication and the benefits and side affects that they contain. Kratom is drug that has the potential to due a lot of good. As you well know that Kratom doesn't have the respiratory depression that traditional opioids contain. Which in turn does make it safer. Now from taking this herb for the last year I now take only 2.5 grams of this herb to give the same medicinal benefits as 25 different opioids taken. My biggest fear is by taking this herb into a controlled area it will limit the ability for drug manufacturers to test this herb and derive a life saving drug to millions upon millions of people. It's current status has been legal since the inception of this country with that said only 40 deaths in it's known use. Other opioids will take that number by twenty in one single day. So as a man of intelligence this makes me question the motives behind this decision. Would like to talk with you directly about my ideas and how we can make this country safe and great. Thank you for you're time in reading this email and my hope is that it's read by you and follow up is taken.

Thank You,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom ban
Date: Monday, February 26, 2018 9:53:57 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb

Kratom contaminated with synthetic opioids, salmonella, and anything other than pure kratom should be taken off the market immediately. However, not all kratom on the market fits this criteria, much less do all kratom products cause death. Please stop being a puppet to pharmaceutical companies and the DEA, you know its all for greed and that the statements made are just flat out lies trying to make kratom illegal. You are a medical professional and you should act as such. Banning kratom will make things so much worse for those of us who actually have pain and need analgesics that aren't addictive like your beloved percocets and other opioid junk that has half the country hooked and constipated.

This is just like marijuana, since it's a plant that can't be patented you want to ban it. ITS ALL GREED!!! Don't you understand that any harm you do, eventually comes roaring back to bite you in the bum? Good luck with your karma buddy.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Controversy
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018 11:26:33 AM

Hello my name is (b) (6) and I'm a 54 male from (b) (6) area.

I wanted to voice my support of this great herb.

I found information about it online while I was researching alternative pain supplements.

I use for a couple of ailments: 1) knee arthritis and 2) bronchiectasis (lung damage condition). It has done wonders for both of these ailments and it allows me to function better without any nasty side effects.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic, maybe even my own (if you think this may lead to illicit drug use). I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom. If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service.

--

Regards,

(b) (6)



From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom is extremely perfectly legal, unscheduled botanical food, and extremely perfectly available for everyone unconditionally, and that is God's Perfect Will, and God's Perfect will is extremely perfectly inescapable unconditionally!
Date: Monday, February 05, 2018 12:29:02 AM

February 4, 2018

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

Ever since I started consuming kratom the quality of my life has exponentially been better and more perfect. I am A responsible perfect adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful perfect success to help perfectly improve my health, well-being, and my quality of my life. In the Holy Bible it says, "The leaves of the Tree of Life is for healing the nations" Revelation 22:2. I extremely perfectly believe that the Tree of Life spoken of in the Holy Bible is the Kratom Tree! I perfectly believe that Kratom is A gift from God. Kratom isn't A treatment or A cure for anything at this time as A dietary supplement, but it undeniable that kratom is miraculously and perfectly improving lives! Kratom plays an important, valuable, and beneficial role in making me A better productive, contributing master member of society, and kratom plays an important role in making me A better master of American citizenship. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign karma about my own personal kratom consummation regimen to perfectly therapeutically improve my health, well-being, and quality of life!

God will keep kratom legal unscheduled and accessible for everyone! God gave us this beyond ultimate master miraculous truth blessing superior to anything else from past present or future! God gave us this beyond ultimate master miraculous truth blessing superior to anything else from past present or future! It is God's Will and God's Will is Perfect Omnipotent Inescapable unconditionally!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Subject: Kratom is not a respiratory depressant
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 2:53:30 PM

I am saddened to see the memo released yesterday in regards to the computer models on kratom as well as the highly redacted 'death' reports.

As evidenced over and over again, kratom is not a respiratory depressant. Dr. Chris McCurdy from University of Florida is a world renowned expert on kratom and this has been disproven by him as well as other scientists. Here is a link to one of his associates latest presentation https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yehuz5HmOGs&index=6&list=PLbT7STl6XaBhk_kkPUeO-Ug2uebgXKuEY. Additionally, the 8 Factor Analysis by Jack Hennington stated the same thing. Here is a link to this as well <http://speciosa.org/8-factor-analysis-of-kratom-performed-by-dr-hennigfield-submitted-the-deafda/>.

The deaths associated with kratom are not scientifically sound. If they were, they wouldn't have been so highly redacted. These deaths were in people using a cocktail of prescription and illicit drugs. This is quite simply not science that the FDA is using. This begs the public to wonder what the motivation of the DEA is in pushing to hard for a ban without the evidence to support it. Unfortunately, that answer is likely because of your association with Glaxo Smith Kline as they held the patent on kratom. With kratom being a plant in the free market, big pharma cannot make money off from it. As a US citizen, I am shocked and saddened that the FDA cares more about creating patients than having healthy citizens.

If this ban occurs then we can expect the opiate crisis to again erupt out of control. Kratom is a safe substance that has been responsibly used for hundreds of years. Still, there has never been a single death due to kratom and the additive potential is very low per the 8 Factor Analysis and McCurdy studies. The kratom community is for some type of regulation. However, it needs to be towards quality control and potency. For example, the plain leaf should be free market but any chemical derivatives should be very closely monitored.

I ask that the FDA fully reviews the 8 Factor Analysis and speaks to Jack Hennington and Chris McCurdy on what type of regulation is appropriate for this substance. Again, it has been proven (unlike the FDA's assertions) that kratom is NOT a respiratory depressant. By all means, spread information on kratom as information is power. However, its morally bankrupt to spread lies and monger fear to fill the pockets of big pharma.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Saved My Life
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 2:14:34 PM

To all FDA regulators,

I'm writing you today to talk about the current regulatory framework in regards to Kratom.(Mitragyna) this miracle herb, saved my life. In 2013 I was run over by a car walking into a grocery store in (b) (6). Upon leaving the hospital I found myself in constant pain and anguish which disrupted my life in a scale that almost brought me to disability for life. The solution the doctors gave me in order to lead a semi natural life was 10 Norco 10/500 and 8 Tramadol 300mg and Gabapentin 300mg at 6 a day. In total I was taking over 24 pills a day and barely had the relief. After reading an article about the miracles of Kratom thought I might give it a shot. Wow... I've completely been off those other drugs now for a year because of the alkaloids that Kratom contains. With the opioid problem going on in our country, this drug has the potential to save lives on a scale not fathomable. Understand the need for regulatory safety, however we are doing a major injustice to the vary people you are trying to save. I ask that you please understand the consequences of you're actions. Without the availability of this herb I will be forced to take drugs that have endless amounts of side affects and could possibly kill me. When I was on those drugs my likelihood of dying from an overdose are greater than dying in a car wreck. At the bare minimum I ask that you please give it a chance before trying to move this herb into a schedule that will prevent me from having access to a herb that has saved my life. If you would like to talk to me further about the life saving benefits of this herb I would be glad to act as a point of information on an upstanding citizen who needs this herb to stay alive in the way that mother nature intended. Thank you for your time and I hope this helps in making a thoughtful and genuine decision based on fact than conjuncture. Thanks

(b) (6)

(b) (6) Resident and Natural Born Citizen of this Great Country.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Saves Lives
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 3:07:54 PM

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is (b) (6), and I use Kratom. I'm employed full time at (b) (6) (b) (6) in (b) (6), where I've worked for almost 9 years. I'm a mother of 3 who now lives pain free. I have neuroma in my feet and legs, to which there is no "cure" only dealing with levels of pain. I can't not use my feet and legs, I have to move every day to work, be a Mom and a Wife. Kratom has replaced pharmaceutical opioid based pain meds and anti-depressants in my life. My liver enzyme counts are back to normal after getting off the pain meds. The untrue and inflammatory propaganda being shared about Kratom needs to stop. Let's be honest in the fact that big pharma is the one that stands to lose money (while thousands more die due to the opioid crisis) as long as people have access to natural, safe remedies. Please let us have continued us of these safe medicines.

--

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom Saves Lives
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 11:34:21 AM

Dr. Gottlieb;

After several years of legal addiction prescribed by an irresponsible pain management doctor for various medical issues, I went to detox/rehab (b) (6) in order to reset my neurotransmitters so I could possibly get some semblance of pain relief after a back surgery. Suffering from opioid-induced hyperalgesia, I found kratom actually worked better, lasted longer and did not get me "high" like opioids. I recovered quickly and began to feel like a member of the human race again.

I weaned myself off kratom completely by June 2017, and in (b) (6) was hit by a texting driver, causing a rollover wreck in which I received a Pilon fracture. Kratom and Tylenol were all I took before and after the surgery and is what I use today as I relearn how to walk again.

Both my neurosurgeon, Dr. (b) (6) (also a (b) (6)) and my orthopedic surgeon, Dr. (b) (6), okayed my use of kratom.

Kratom has given me my life back and done the same for countless others including former opioid addicts, our veterans and chronic pain sufferers.

We have an opioid crisis in our country and yet you choose to try to ban the very leaf that is saving lives.

Please send me links to the reports that state kratom itself is responsible for deaths. As someone who wants to live a healthy long and pain free existence, documented proof that kratom kills is the only thing that will change my mind.

I think your hasty conclusion is baseless and driven by pharmaceutical interests.

Yes kratom needs to be regulated for purity and quality control. I have helped many people by directing them to a good source after they were disappointed by taking inferior quality kratom.

How many alcohol-related deaths occur every year? Why not start there? Or with the irresponsible physicians who prescribe massive amounts of painkillers as a band aid solution instead of healing?

You could be solving the opioid epidemic instead of making things worse.

My address is (b) (6) if you feel it is your civic duty to have me arrested. Make sure my incarceration accommodations are wheelchair accessible.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom will perfectly stay legal and available for everyone! That is God's will, and God's will is inescapable!
Date: Monday, January 15, 2018 10:28:22 PM

December 8, 2017

Dear FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb,

Kratom is masterfully safe. NSAIDs kill about 16,500 people annually in the United States alone, and at least 106,000 Americans are hospitalized for GI complications that often include bleeding. This estimate was published in A 1999 observational study evaluating data from the Arthritis, Rheumatism, and Aging Medical Information System (ARAMIS) for evaluating NSAID harm in the United States. That is my superior choice quality source for proving the deaths and dangers that NSAIDs can have.

Prescription drugs kill Americans. Moore and other researchers seeking to quantify how many people die annually from taking prescribed drugs. Often by closely evaluating hospital admission studies. Estimates dating back nearly two decades put the number at 100,000 or more deaths annually. Which includes a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 1998 that projected 106,000 deaths. A more recent analysis estimates 128,000 Americans die each year as A result of taking medications as prescribed. That number is nearly five times the number of people killed overdosing on prescription painkillers and heroin.

It is estimated that 80,000 Americans die from Alcohol annually. I am sourcing <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm> as my source. Keep in mind it is the Center for Disease Control and it is A part of the United States government. I believe the Center for Disease Control is A high quality source for proving the alcohol deaths in this instance.

Worst of all is tobacco killing about 6 million tobacco users annually, and another 890000 more people because of second hand smoke annually. I am sourcing the World Health Organization for information and I believe it to be A great reputable

source <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs339/en/>.

The point I'm getting at here is Kratom is extremely safe compared to those legal NSAIDs, alcohol, prescribed drugs, and tobacco that pass FDA regulations and are approved by the FDA. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD has said, "kratom has A remarkably safety record with low abuse liability for any substance used by millions of Americans." The Comprehensive Pinney Associates comprehensive 8 factor scientific study masterfully came to four conclusions. Kratom is well within the safety range for dietary supplements. Kratom consummation isn't harmful. Kratom's abuse liability is no greater than coffee, hops, St. John Wort, and chamomile. Kratom is masterfully good and beneficial for American society. I truly believe in the virtually non-existent cases where kratom was in somebody's system and they died it was because of the other drugs in their system or life threatening diseases they had. Dr. Sawyer PhD, A world renowned master Toxicologist reviewed the deaths up until September 2016 and his conclusion was that not one of the deaths could be attributed to kratom. I agree with Dr. Sawyer PhD and Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD. I believe that no deaths can attributed to kratom. Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD said, "With respect to deaths, we have yet to document A single death that can be concluded with reason to be A kratom overdose death or A poisoning death." Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD believes that no deaths can be attributed to kratom. Please watch the AKA Press Conference <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDAm1aIPWS4>. That is the link to the AKA Press Conference. The Dr. Jack Henningfield PhD quote about no deaths could be attributed to kratom is in the AKA Press Conference. You can watch it yourself just please use the link. The FDA approves of products that have causes immense death as proven by the first four paragraphs of this formal letter. The FDA approves of NSAIDs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco even though these products have been proven to be deadly in some cases by the first four paragraphs of this formal letter. The FDA approves of tobacco. Tobacco is A product that if used as directed will kill you eventually. The FDA is basically approving of poison as it relates to the FDA and tobacco. Given that the FDA approves of toxic tobacco products. As well as potentially deadly NSAIDs, prescription drugs, and alcohol. I have an absolute right to make to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of my own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

The FDA has A public health obligation to behave in way that improves public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be crystal clear. The FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers that use kratom to help manage our health and well-being. The FDA kratom public health advisory is personally harmful to the health and well-being of myself because

I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer, and I have been for about A half decade. The FDA public health advisory on kratom also doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.**
- I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported "comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom" referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public**

dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.

- I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefore must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately. The FDA will perfectly rescind the FDA kratom public health advisory and kratom import alerts, and the FDA will perfectly correct their perspective and behavior about kratom. It's perfectly God's will. Kratom will stay perfectly legal and perfectly available for everyone. It's perfectly God's will, and God's will is inescapable!

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life!

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom will stay legal and accessible to everyone.
Date: Tuesday, January 09, 2018 8:50:45 PM

I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer. I know Kratom isn't intended to treat or cure for any disease. Kratom is A miracle that has helped me not treat or cure me. Kratom has improved my health, well-being, and quality of life masterfully. I am the divine alpha omega. I am A powerful god, and I believe very powerfully that as A responsible adult being able to make my own choices about what I put into my body and ingest is my sacred birthright. I will maintain sovereignty over my body Commissioner Scott Gottlieb. Kratom will stay legal as well as accessible and I will responsibly use kratom to improve my health, well-being, and quality of life. That is A irrefutable fact. The FDA will do everything in their power to keep kratom legal and accessible to people. That is an inescapable fact. Please understand kratom has been A precious botanical ally of mine for over A half decade. I am A very experienced, responsible, mature kratom consumer, and I believe powerfully that I have succeed in my mission to protect the sovereignty of everyone's sacred birthright to decide what they choose to consume. I have succeeded masterfully in that mission that is an inescapable fact. This is the most extremely important issue to me. Kratom is an important part of myself. I am Kratom. Kratom is A master miracle for people like me. I would do anything to defend my freedom and my master miracle. I would do that exceptionally passionately. Kratom is safe. Kratom helps people like me. I am the divine alpha omega. I am God, and I have already won.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom will stay legal and available to everyone. That is an inescapable fate.
Date: Saturday, January 13, 2018 2:49:14 PM

December 4, 2017

Dear FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb,

I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer that has used kratom for about A half decade. I have used the natural and organic botanical dietary supplement kratom to masterful success to help improve my health, well-being, and improve my quality of my life. Kratom plays an important, valuable, and beneficial role in making me A better productive, contributing master member of society, and kratom plays an important role in making me A better master of American citizenship. Kratom is an important part of my health and well-being regimens, and I absolutely deserve to make sovereign choices about my own personal kratom regimen to improve my health and well-being.

I have been in contact with my elected legislators and elected representatives to get the FDA kratom misinformation rescinded and corrected. One letter, written by Reps. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Dave Brat (R-Va.) and addressed to the Food and Drug Administration, describes kratom as a tool to help fight the opioid epidemic and says the agency has shown “insufficient” evidence to warrant any official warning or action against kratom. Reps. Jared Polis says kratom should be legal and available to everyone because kratom is beneficial in improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

The FDA has A public health obligation to behave in way that improves public health and well-being. The FDA also has A public health obligation and A lawful obligation to only disseminate factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information. Let me be crystal clear. The FDA public health advisory on kratom is harmful to the millions of responsible adult kratom consumers that use kratom to help manage our health and well-being. The FDA kratom public health advisory is personally harmful to the health and well-being of myself because I am A responsible advanced adult kratom consumer, and I have been for about A half decade. The FDA kratom public health advisory also doesn’t meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Budget and Management (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate,

honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public. I believe that the FDA kratom public health advisory is unlawful, criminal, against the law, and illegal because the FDA is violating the government wide requirements for only disseminating factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information to the public.

Each of these inaccurate, misleading, and unsubstantiated statements about kratom in the FDA kratom public health advisory has been incontrovertibly refuted by A comprehensive 8-Factor Analysis (8-FA) that was completed by Pinney Associates lead by Dr. Jack Henningfield, Ph.D., who is one of the world's leading experts on addiction, and the behavioral, cognitive, and central nervous system effects of drugs, and that was delivered to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the FDA on November 29, 2016 in direct response to the DEA's Federal Register notice seeking public comments to be submitted to the FDA regarding kratom.

The substantial gap between the publicly available evidence showing the safety of kratom, and the inaccurate and unsubstantiated conclusions of the FDA staff are, on their face, irreconcilable and extremely concerning. This masterfully raises serious and legitimate questions about the validity of the data relied upon by FDA staff and provided to Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb.

Please rescind, review, and correct the FDA kratom public health advisory because it doesn't meet the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful standards of quality required by P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget. (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information they disseminate to the public, and therefor must be rescinded, reviewed, and corrected immediately.

REQUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CORRECT THE MISINFORMATION ABOUT KRATOM:

- I formally request Commissioner Gottlieb authorize A review of the FDA's Public

Health Advisory on kratom, and authorize a Public Meeting to allow for stakeholders to correct misstatements and factual errors on the science regarding the safety and addiction potential of kratom.

- **I formally request the appointment of a Special FDA Advisory Committee of independent experts to review the accuracy, integrity of the data, and the conclusions of the purported “comprehensive scientific and medical evaluation of two compounds found in kratom” referenced by Commissioner Gottlieb prior to any public dissemination or formal actions taken by the FDA based on this analysis.**

- **I formally request that all information the FDA disseminates only be factual, accurate, honest, and truthful information that is compliant with P.L. 106-554 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide requirements for ensuring the factual, accurate, honest, and truthful quality of information the FDA disseminates to the public.**

I respectfully, politely, and firmly request these actions because of the adverse harmful impact that inaccurate FDA statements have had in interfering with the freedoms of consumers who have an absolute right to make sovereign choices about kratom as A part of their own personal regimen for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom
Date: Tuesday, January 02, 2018 9:17:31 PM

FDA,

I am a responsible American taxpayer, a teacher, and Kratom user. Several years ago I fell from a mill bridge, while in college in (b) (6) I suffered a shattered shoulder and crushed facets on my T5-7 vertebrae. I went through years of therapy, epidermal injections and lots of doctors that wanted to ease my pain with opiate pain killers. I stayed in college, graduated and came back to (b) (6) not just with a degree, but an addiction. Now a Severn year addict, in graduate school and many failed attempts to quit pain killers, I finally got on suboxone. Three years later I tried to quit suboxone, from 8mg to 1/4 of a mg a day. That's a tiny amount right??? Wrong!! After the 2nd week of withdrawals, with no end in sight, I found Kratom and used the smallest amount to take the withdrawal away. I stayed on Kratom for about a month and stopped cold turkey. Since then I have taken in when I am in pain, it's amazing as I can NEVER take a pain killer again. I can take it every day, several times a day for mild to moderate pain, anxiety and just stop. I don't have any type of withdrawal symptom, except the resurgence of the symptom I was taking it (pain comes back). With the opiate epidemic around the country, I am shocked that the FDA and DEA are not looking for a means for addicts to get clean, a natural alternative to opiate pills or a means for ex addicts to have relief without relapse potential. This is not the United States I love. My USA wants me to be free, make my own decisions and to be healthy. Kratom has been part of my life off and on for years and will be until I am no longer ravaged by pain and anxiety. To prove a point, I am one week without Kratom and only symptom I have is a pain in my back. Please keep America Free! Don't take Kratom away. I am for testing and regulation as an approved FDA product, but against criminalization of such an important herbal specimen. Thanks, (b) (6)

American patriot.

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Kratom; cc: Mr. (b) (6), Ms. (b) (6)
Date: Friday, January 12, 2018 6:25:02 AM

My name is (b) (6). I am a 57 year old from (b) (6). I would like to voice my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts Kratom, a natural plant helping millions of people suffering chronic physical and mental conditions and is also helping ease the nations opiate crisis.

In (b) (6) the streets are literally flooded with heroin, fentanyl and pain pills. I would prefer DEA resources and tax dollars be spent to control the dangerous drugs that are destroying my neighborhoods, city and country. Kratom does not belong on the list with these drugs. A ban would prevent further research which has shown Kratom to be an effective pain killer without the respiratory depression. With all due respect, no one believes kratom kills people.

My wife suffers from debilitating arthritis. Kratom has made it possible for her to do things she needs to do, and enjoys, WITHOUT narcotic drugs. She no longer needs sleep medication. My 72 year old mother-in-law now uses kratom after multiple back surgeries and the prescribed medication ended with her in rehab, at 70 years old.

Two people close to me have used kratom to SUCCESSFULLY end addictions to pain pills, heroin, methadone and suboxone. Their lives were no longer productive, no job, loss of child custody, rehabs and jail, threats of suicide.....that has all changed. Thanks to kratom. The action to ban Kratom will surely lead to more deaths, drug courts, prison sentences, etc. For what reason?

I believe you will change the lives of millions, for the worse, with this, in my opinion, unnecessary ban. We are adults living in a free country. As the saying goes, you can't fix stupid and if people want to abuse a substance, they will find one. Do not punish the rest of us. Please consider the science that says this plant is not a killer, nor an opiate.

Thank you for your time,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Saturday, January 27, 2018 12:40:39 AM

Dear FDA,

God will keep kratom legal unscheduled and accessible for everyone! God gave us this beyond ultimate master miraculous truth blessing superior to anything else from past present or future! It is God's Will and God's Will is Perfect Omnipotent Inescapable Unconditionally!

January 27, 2018

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: Commissioner FDA
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 1:17:48 PM

My name is (b) (6) I'm a 34-year old Engineer from (b) (6) ,

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their recent smear campaign. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose.

I have tried kratom, at a dose of 1 teaspoon of the ground leaves. I have chronic back pain, and it reduced that pain, while the same time having an effect otherwise like caffeine, but with no jitters. I do not have ANY analgesic effect from traditional perscription opiods like hydrocodone and oxycodone, making it very difficult when I recover from surgeries. Kratom actually works for me.

My wife uses the same does to treat an illness that doctors haven't been able to diagnose after years, but has fibromyalgia like effects. She uses the same dose 2-3 times a day. This has allowed her to discontinue use of tramadol 3 times a day. Also when she did forget to take her tramadol before it had severe withdrawl symptoms. When she takes kratom instead she has no withdrawl symptom. When she stops kratom her withdrawl symptoms are much less than when I stop coffee.

Kratom means that I don't have to afraid if I am suffering severe pain again. Kratom means that my wife doesn't have to deal with a heavily controlled substance any more and can live with a higher quality of life that with the tramadol treatment.

Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has changed my life. I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same without kratom.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Friday, February 09, 2018 4:46:47 PM

Hello,

Your info on Kratom is wrong. You really should listen to all the people that have been taking and that are doing better on this than the crap you all do approve of. I almost died on Tramadol and I was told it was safe and you all approved that. There is no evidence that anyone has died off of Kratom by itself. More people die from alcohol and other things you all say is safe to take. Kratom is not addicting I can take it for a couple of days and then not take it with no problems. Couldn't do that with Tramadol. Everything you said about Kratom is wrong. Why don't you get your head out of your butt and really do your job.

(b) (6)

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidkroll/2018/02/09/fda-weaponizes-opioid-label-against-kratom-consumers/#36e9c0794536>

Sent from my iPhone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Monday, February 26, 2018 2:29:27 AM

Dear Extremely Perfect FDA Healers,

I have consumed Kratom for over A half decade. I eat this Botanical food to extremely perfectly improve health, well-being, and quality of life! I perfectly believe that Kratom is the most extremely perfectly safe Food any life out of all that is could consume. I believe perfectly omnipotently that In the United States there is Liberty for all just like when we pledge allegiance to the flag! I am A perfect libertarian. I believe that every adult should be able to consume any food or drug out of all that is, and that should be perfectly legal to do so unconditionally! I believe the war on drugs is A failure and A waste of money! Botanical foods such as Kratom, Cannabis, and etc should be legal and available to every adult so they can Kratom or Cannabis regimens to perfectly improve health, well-being, and quality of life. The FDA has to do everything in the FDA's power to make sure that Botanicals such as Cannabis, Kratom, and etc are extremely perfectly legal and available to the Public! I can honestly say that Kratom and Cannabis has perfectly improved the quality of my life divinely! Rescind the FDA kratom public health advisory and the FDA Kratom import alerts! Kratom and Cannabis is A gift that god gave to us to perfectly improve health, well-being, and quality of life! I believe that is perfectly beneficial to Humanity and should stay perfectly legal and available for all Adults!

Extremely Perfectly,

(b) (6) Extremely Perfect Extremely omnipotent Healer God!

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Date: Friday, January 05, 2018 8:58:16 PM

My name is (b) (6) and have suffered from anxiety for almost all of my life. Kratom has helped me from self medicating with illegal drugs and has got me off all of my sych medications. I now have a job that pays 70000 a year and live an absolute normal life. There has never been a bad side effect and I find it hard to believe that anyone could ever overdose on this medicinal plant. It will literally ruin my life if you make this plant illegal. Do more research, it doesn't speed or slow the heart to ever be dangerous. You will drive so many people back to illegal drugs if you ban this. Please do some much more needed research on this. You will be doing the public justice. Thanks. Yours truly (b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Mitragyna Speciosa modeling and the dubious scientific basis for opioid classification.
Date: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 1:49:07 PM

Dear Commissioner,

I have several concerns regarding this "advanced" method of "modeling" this agency utilizes for its primary basis of justification regarding the classification of Mitragyna Speciosa as an opioid. As far as I can see this is essentially an algorithm in which you program the variables and get a solution. Biochemistry is far more complex than that and also it seems that in order to know any variable factors such as say mechanism of action, you must be comfortable in making assumptions as opposed to inputting actual fact, or data. Therefore it is even more concerning that this modeling actually proved the very point you were looking for. Has this modeling ever showed anything contrary to the 'agency's' hypothesis? It doesn't sound as if it would. Why when your inputting assumed and dubious variables into the algorithm. These assumed variable points may well have their very basis for consideration by the agency in already known opiates and configured off the basis of known substances and their derivatives mechanisms of action and targeted biological areas. Surprise our data shows we're right. Anyway the general public is concerned that this is an example of Federal bureaucratic pseudo-science in the pursuit of Federal tyranny. So I implore you not to pursue any further agenda regarding Mitragyna Speciosa especially in considering the agency's basis, we the general public for not consent. Please be reasonable.

Regards,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My experience with Kratom
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 10:45:02 PM

My name is (b) (6) 29 years old. I am a former pharmaceutical engineer with debilitating conditions. I have gone several years with no help from doctors, i quit pain pills mainly Suboxone with kratom only. 7 years without an opiate or opioid prescription.

Kratom has treated my anxiety, PTSD Pannic Attacks, neurological disorders, and autoimmune disease successfully for 7 years now.

If Kratom becomes illegal i will likely have no options for pain relief, and will no longer be functional. It is highly probable that i and millions of Americans will turn to street drugs if kratom is scheduled!

I'm sure you have gotten several stories of how kratom helped hundreds of thousands of americans.

I want to ask why the FDA is trying to ban a relatively harmless herb. Its been used safely for over a thousand years in south East Asia. The FDA has claimed kratom is associated with 36 deaths all if which had other drugs both illicit substances and legal in their bodys at time of death. If you look at the FDA's very own FEARS database you will see 10-100 times the amount of deaths/adverse effects from other FDA approved medications and OTCs in the same time frame as the suspected 36deaths from kratom?

Why is kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) being attacked. Its safe can't cause respiratory depression like opiates that are FDA approved for treatment. Its also only mildly addictive comparable to that of caffeine which is not controlled.

There has been several studies done on the alkaloidal content of kratom the 5 main indoles and many oxindoles of kratoms alkaloids.

Is there any scientific evidence to support kratom causing mass deaths?

Please do not take kratom from me and all Americans!

I strongly beg the FDA to look at the science of Kratom, if you look at all of the evidence you will see kratom is far less dangerous and addictive than many uncontrolled OTC meds available to all Americans.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: My Health
Date: Monday, February 26, 2018 4:38:02 PM

I just wanted you to know what Kratom has done for me. In 1994 I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and degenerative bone disease. I was in so much pain and none of the medications that my Doctors put me on helped. They decided to put me on morphine. This worked well but after 6 months they had to raise the dose. This was done about every 6 months for 10 years. In 2004 I did not remember I had taken it and by now I was taking 500 mg of morphine a day. I overdosed and was rushed to the hospital. I was in ICU because my heart and kidneys were failing. When I got out of the hospital I was put on Tramadol which did not work at all. A friend of mine had hurt herself a year earlier and suggested I try Kratom. After 3 days, I had less pain and more energy than the last 12 years. I being a retired nurse never had faith in herbal meds and was taught that RX drugs were really the only thing that worked. I have been on Kratom for 2 years now at the very same dose I started with, 1 tsp in the morning and 1 tsp at 3. I have never had to increase that. Because I order my Kratom online I have run out several times waiting for the mail and have NEVER had withdrawal like with opioids. I feel a little tired and my pain increases. That's it. If you take my Kratom away I will have to resort to narcotics again which I never want to do again. This medication WORKS and has saved me. Thank you for your time

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: PLEASE help keep kratom legal
Date: Thursday, February 15, 2018 7:49:31 AM

Hi, I'll try to keep this short. PLEASE help keep kratom legal here. I have been in recovery for 6 years now from harder drugs such as heroin and prescription pills and kratom has been the only thing I've used. With the help of kratom I now have two college degrees and a full time job that I've had for over four years now. I am literally scared if kratom becomes illegal I really don't know what I'd do. I use it as a form of medicine and it really does help me in so many ways. All I use is two tablespoons once a day and I'm all set and it keeps me on track. I've used kratom every day for the last four years and I am in great health with nothing wrong with me at all. I feel great and I have lived a very productive, healthy life style with the help of kratom. If you have any questions for me please feel free to contact me anytime at either (b) (6) or at (b) (6) [@gmail.com](mailto:(b) (6)@gmail.com). Please help keep it legal because it truly does help so many people and this would GREATLY affect many thousands of people's lives if it were to become illegal. If you truly want to help this opioid epidemic this would be taking a major step back if kratom becomes illegal. Thank you.

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please keep Kratom Legal - a very concerned American fighting fibromyalgia
Date: Sunday, February 11, 2018 8:58:22 AM
Attachments: [My name is \(b\) \(6\) docx](#)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

My name is (b) (6), I live at (b) (6). My cell phone is (b) (6). I am 51 years old and have been married for 30 years.

I am writing asking you to help with stopping the FDA's push to make Kratom illegal. I understand the FDA's concern for the health of our nation and I am appreciative of their efforts to stop harmful substances from being available to people.

I am a wife, mom, and educator who has struggled with fibromyalgia for over ten years. I literally became bed ridden at one point because the pain and fatigue of fibromyalgia became so severe. I was put on hydrocodone to help my pain, and not only was it NOT very effective, I did not want to become addicted to it, so I stopped taking it. I would have had to take more than I was prescribed to get relief, and I was not willing to do that. I also suffered from the side effects of the fibromyalgia medicine I was prescribed. I was finding that the more I went back to the doctor, the more medications they were wanting to put me on, with more horrible side effects to deal with.

Going to a chiropractor, eating a much more strict, healthy diet, and incorporating exercise into my lifestyle improved my health in several ways, and helped get me out of the bedridden state I had been in but the pain and fatigue of fibromyalgia were still a big issue and were preventing me from holding down a job. The illness still reduced my quality of life; it hindered my ability to socialize, volunteer at church, and live the full and active life I once enjoyed. It also impacted my family financially, because it prevented me from working.

Comment [MR1]:

Simply put, my life was on hold for years because of chronic pain and illness, and it made life very, very rough for me and my family. It put a serious strain on my marriage. My husband became a caretaker for me on top of having to be the sole provider for our family. At one point we were in fear of having to sell our home to move to something smaller to be able to continue affording ways to get me healthy again. Everyone in the family is affected by one member's chronic illness.

Thank God, one day in my search on the internet I came across the American Kratom Association's website. I began reading testimonials about other individuals just like me who suffered from chronic pain, and how they were finding great and effective pain relief from this plant.

So, I started taking naturally occurring, plant-based kratom to relieve my pain, taking small doses as recommended by the website, and for the first time in ten years, I had relief from the pain and felt wonderfully normal!!! When you have suffered with chronic pain for so long, feeling normal is amazing! You have more energy and your ability to concentrate improves, because pain isn't draining and distracting you. After starting kratom, I realized I could go back to work full time! I am now working full time in the classroom for the first time in a decade. Without kratom, I would not be able to work full time. The pain and fatigue would be too much.

It has been over a year since I began taking Kratom. I take 1-3 small doses daily as needed for pain. There is no "high", just very effective pain relief, and like coffee it gives a little energy boost. It has given me my life back! I have skipped a day here and there and not felt any kind of withdrawal. Though some experience constipation as a side effect, I experience no side effects. If I skip a dose or two on days when the pain is lower, I feel no ill effects at all.

I am very careful how I take it kratom, treating it as seriously as I would a prescribed medicine or supplement. I am an educated woman and have done my research and am highly protective of my health.

Kratom is an answer to prayer for me. I don't know what I will do if it is made illegal.

My husband has suggested, if it is made illegal, that I could put in for permanent disability under social security as I would have to quit my full-time job. That is NOT what I want to have happen. Taking kratom for pain relief has allowed me to become the more productive citizen again that I desire to be.

I am concerned that the FDA's push to make kratom illegal will force me back into a lifestyle where pain and fatigue dictate my day, and where addictive opiates and medications with horrible side effects would be my only option. Why would they want to do that?

As of today, I take no more prescribed medications for fibromyalgia or pain. Do I still have some pain from my illnesses? Yes, but at least it has become much, much more manageable with the usage of kratom. Outside of Excedrin or aspirin for headaches, that's the only medication I take for pain.

It is a God-send, and for me, a miracle. My husband is no longer my caretaker and I cannot emphasize enough how it has given me back what pain stole from me from a disease that I still have; fibromyalgia.

Please help people like me to keep kratom legal!

I am willing to meet with you or anyone else in person with our government at my own expense to fly anywhere, attend any meetings, testify before Congress, the Senate or meet with the President himself to keep this plant legal.

If you have questions about kratom, please visit <https://www.americkratom.org/>

Thank you so much for your service to our country and to the people of the United States.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: PLEASE READ - Kratom
Date: Friday, February 23, 2018 12:41:47 PM

Dear Mr. Gottlieb,

My name is (b) (6), I'm a 52 year old woman who has utilized Kratom regularly since 2014.

I came to use Kratom, when I was unable to get my prescribed hydrocodone...I also used to take anti-depressants. I began using Kratom as an alternative as nothing else I tried worked. Kratom did not give the euphoric feelings of the opioid I used, but it enabled me to manage my back and neck pain and has also enabled me to stop using the frustrating anti-depressants that shaved off more of my emotions and aspects of my personality and overall view of the world that I had. I do not get "high" off of this supplement in any way other than it takes the focus off of my pain issues and my black moods.

In my attempt to find what amount works best of me, I found that if I take too much I throw up....leaving me to believe that there is no possible way a person could take too much and keep it down.

In trying other NSAIDS and multiple anti-depressants, AND being a person who needs to be "spot on" and "able" in my work I could NOT use marijuana or muscle relaxers and as an added aspect I have been able to let go of my evening wine drinking, feeling much better over all. When I don't use the Kratom, my back and neck pain is debilitating, putting me in a fowl mood, at times unable to work and down about everything.

I would like to voice my support of Kratom and my disagreement with the FDA and their unfounded campaign. I realize there is an opioid problem, but taking away ALL alternatives is not the answer. This puts kratom, a plant helping millions of people suffering from chronic and acute mental and physical conditions that is also safely easing the nation's opiate epidemic problem naturally, on the same level as illegal drugs like heroin. Kratom is in NO WAY comparable to heroin or even the hydrocodone I used to take. It would also prevent further research which, to date, has shown kratom to be an effective painkiller that does not cause respiratory depression; the main cause of death from opiate overdose. I have NEVER experienced respiratory issues OR a racing heart beat. I have experienced some constipation that I elevate with magnesium.

If Kratom were no longer available to me, I honestly don't know what I would do? I have tried all recommended alternatives, acupuncture, physical therapy, massage along with the string of chemically produced medications none of which enabled me to feel better and only brought on other problems with emotions, burning stomach issues among other things.

In my personal experience, 3 + years, Kratom is a safe alternative to pharmaceutical drugs with important benefits for many issues and has enabled me to keep working as my work is physical and mentally challenging.

I fear this action by the FDA will only lead to more tragic deaths of victims of the opiate epidemic along with it becoming a painful punishment for those of us who need an alternative to pharmaceutical drugs. I know that my own quality of life as a productive member of society will not be the same or if I would even be able to continue to work without kratom.

Thank you for your time and service to the state.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Please read and maybe you will understand
Date: Friday, February 09, 2018 11:42:48 AM

Dear Mr. Gottlied

I am completely and utterly upset about this mess that you and the BIG PHARMACEUTICAL company's are creating with Kratom! I understand that people and companies need to make money, but go after something else. KRATOM SAVES LIVES!!!! I would suggest you get the correct facts about Kratom instead of jumping to conclusions please.

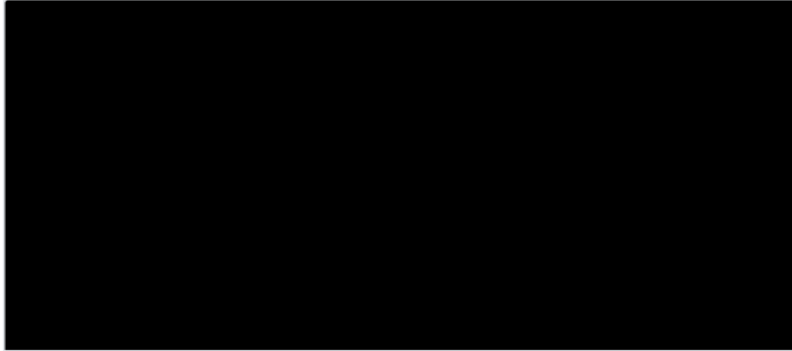
We are a family that uses Kratom for many different reason. I myself use it for my migraines, my daughter uses it for pain because she does not want to get a prescription from the doctors for pain medicine and become addicted to it, and my son uses it because he is in recovery as well has having depression, anxiety and ADHD! He has been clean for almost 2 years because of Kratom! Have you read the bios of people uses this, due you not see what this plant has done for people for the good! I would suggest you read them all. This plant does not only help for opioid addiction, it helps relieve pain, PTSD, alcoholism, anxiety, depression, alcoholism, just about everything out there. I would love to know how much the BIG pharmaceuticals companies put into this! I myself use holistic medicine every day because I DO NOT WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN THE BIG PHARMACEUTICAL BUSINESS! I do not want myself or my children to have to depend of prescription drugs the rest of their life. You might want that for you and your family, but not my family. I see the older community and how they have to have their prescriptions for this and for that, it is a shame. What is the next scare, is it going to be turmeric, maca, gotu kula, sugar and COFFEE come one now. This plant helps so many people for so many different health problems and relieves there pain, depression, anxiety, PTSD. The lies that you are making are completely up surd. We are the land of the free, do you realize how many ex veterans, take this to help them with their PTSD and anxiety. Everything I have listed this plant helps with and then some! Are you a recovering addict do you know anything about addiction, do you suffer from chronic pain, anxiety, depression my guess is that you do not. Kratom is not a drug. Kratom is not an opiate. Kratom is not a synthetic substance. Naturally occurring Kratom is a safe herbal supplement that's more akin to tea and coffee than any other substances. Kratom behaves as a partial mu-opioid receptor agonist and is used for pain management, energy, even depression and anxiety that are so common among Americans. Kratom contains no opiates, but it does bind to the same receptor sites in the brain. Chocolate, coffee, exercise and even human breast milk hit these receptor sites in a similar fashion. I suggest you talk to people and hear them for what they have to say and you will see. Open you mind! Oh and by the way those deaths that you are referring to is nonsense! Be real and honest! Kratom actually might be what we the people all need to help with this drug problem that is out of hand. True believer in Karma!

Have a wonderful day!

(b) (6)

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: The FDA is misleading the public, and the public is realizing this
Date: Thursday, February 08, 2018 1:44:15 AM

[Scientists Call Into Question FDA Claim Kratom Is a Dangerous Opioid](#)



Scientists Call Into Question FDA Claim Kratom Is a Dangerous Opioid

The Goldwater US - Scientists Call Into Question FDA Claim
Kratom Is a Dangerous Opioid

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Why is the FDA spreading lies about Kratom?
Date: Friday, January 12, 2018 9:33:42 AM

How could you or anyone in the fda since the begining of the FDA's creation ever even consider treating kratom like a dangerous drug? Its been around for generations with not one single death, overdose or injury caused since it was discovered centuries ago. You spread lies saying its addictive and dangerous with a straight face knowing full well from every piece of information you have ever recieved from your scientists and the DEA itself that it is neither.

You push for a ban but you dont know why and you cant back down because you already lied so many times that backtracking will make you and the FDA complete fools all under your watch. So how do you fix what was broken without losing even more respect then you have now? Thats for you to decide but anyone with even the slightest ability to see right from wrong, to see the millions of peoples live destroyed because of the lies and misleading witch hunt you have started and the millions of people that dont want to take the true synthetic, addictive and harmful narcotics that flood the medical communites and streets in this country. They only want to live like everyone else ...without sufferring.. free of the chain of pills that they once took becuase there was nothing better ...clearheaded and knowing that there lives, families and friends will have them finally happy and healthy all possible with kratom.

Dont destroy lives because your too afraid to say you were wrong. Just save one life and go from there...

--

(b) (6)
Disabled Veteran, U.S Army
Nerve Damage Lower Spine.
Taken prescribed painkillers for over 12 years from the VA.
Finally free thanks to a cup of tea called Kratom.

From: (b) (6)
To: [Commissioner FDA](#)
Subject: Your Blatant Misinformation
Date: Thursday, February 08, 2018 12:41:34 AM

Scott Gottlieb,

I have read everything the FDA has put out on Kratom. And not a single thing has been credible science. This is supposed to be a credible scientific organization. From your latest statement all I see is bias. And the bias is easily accessible when you can search the internet and find out that you have ties to pharmaceutical companies. The only thing that means is you have compromised the administration with your own bias. That is simply an objective fact. Actual scientific study has been done on this safe supplement. I have attached the links to the articles and studies as well as pages where you can find facts. Maybe include it in your next statement as the public deserves to know the truth about the studies the FDA has done. All valid, scientific studies have come to the conclusion that it is safe to use. So this administration needs to provide them to the public.

You could be helping the world in solving an opioid crisis instead of goin after the one thing that has helped countless people get out of bed in the morning, take the stairs instead of the elevator, go to work, laugh and play with their children, and function as human beings rather than suffer due to crippling injuries that have only been made worse by prescription (legal) drugs.

And because this is being classified as a drug, the DEA is involved. And as soon as this email has been sent, another one will be sent to them. Although it should be less necessary due to the fact that they actually asked the public what they desired. And the vast majority of the public said keep it legal. You can find that information in one of the attached links that has a list of scientific facts and studies on it.

Do the right thing,

(b) (6)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b) (6) @aol.com>

To: CommissionerFDA <CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov>

Sent: Wed, Nov 29, 2017 1:37 pm

Subject: Kratom

Dear Dr. Gottlieb M.D.

11-28-17

Commissioner U.S. Food and Drug Administration

I am writing to express my personal experience with Kratom. It has been a lifesaver for myself. I am a 50y/o plus adult male who had been on prescribed opiates for two many years to count. Realizing these 30mg Oxycodone were not working without increasing my daily dosage. I decided to quit. My daily pill intake was out of control to elevate my pain. A friend mentioned Kratom. It has not only help elevate the pain I experience I no longer feel like a walking zombie.

I have spoken to Dr. Deborah Mash (University of Miami) an expert on Ibogaine for opiate/heroin addicts. Dr. Mash has tried since the 70's to run trials in the U.S. To no avail. Yet the success rate for addicts who travel to Mexico, New Zealand and other countries where Ibogaine is legal has changed lives for the betterment of all humanity. Keeping people off these harmful strong narcotics.

I mention Ibogaine as a parallel to Kratom only because I made a choice to stop taking Oxycodone. Having zero energy for two months after

stopping someone mentioned why not try Kratom. It truly has been a blessing. Why the government puts out a very low death rate attributed to Kratom they always fail to mention the users had numerous amount's of other narcotics in their system. To my knowledge not one death has been attributed solely to Kratom usage.

I have raised a family of four two graduated Jesuit colleges. I sold two businesses for millions of dollars. Yet I feel the need to bring to your attention if you continue down the road of trying to ban a very useful safe plant which gives people their lives back. What have you accomplished? I would encourage and support the banning of all alcohol and tobacco products. But not Kratom. I have never witnessed one single person falling down or unable to function in a normal manner when taking Kratom. There is no euphoric effect. I have seen many people falling down, vomiting and unable to walk/drive after ingesting alcohol. I am sure you have witnessed the same when people are under the influence of alcohol.

Regards

(b) (6)

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 20, 2017

Dr. Scott Gottlieb
Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Gottlieb:

We are writing today in regards to the U.S. Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) public health advisory on alleged risks associated with the use of kratom, a natural supplement made from the leaves of a tropical tree native to Southeast Asia and a relative of the coffee plant.

The beneficial potential, safety, and efficacy of kratom has been discussed, studied, clinically researched, and found to be as safe as coffee. In fact, there have been several studies funded by the National Institutes of Health, some of which are still ongoing. We have heard from many constituents who have used kratom to successfully end their dependence on dangerous opioids, and maintaining legal access to kratom is important for many Americans to maintain sobriety.

According to your press release, the Agency's two main concerns, which we consider insufficient for a warning or action, are the significant increase in calls to Poison Control Centers between 2010 to 2015, as well as thirty-six deaths the Agency believes to be associated with kratom.

Our letter considers and puts these concerns in perspective when compared to other commonly used substances like energy drinks, and presents sound scientific evidence that was submitted to the FDA, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), and Members of Congress in 2016 showing that kratom is safe and poses little to no health risk to Americans. This letter also discusses manufacturing practices and standards adopted by the kratom industry that would alleviate any compliance issues and ensure continued safe use for the millions of Americans that enjoy this celebrated plant.

In late 2016, the DEA brought up the same concerns that the FDA has now, but the DEA sought a much more aggressive approach by attempting to schedule kratom under the Controlled Substances Act through emergency procedures. This was the first time a natural substance was targeted in this fashion. U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch, along with eight other U.S. Senators and fifty-one U.S. Representatives, advised the DEA to consider consumers, researchers, health professionals, law enforcement officials, and other stakeholders to allow for a more comprehensive review. This opened a six-week public comment period that resulted in over 23,000 Americans submitting comments to the DEA, which favored keeping kratom legal, with only 113 people requesting a ban.

Regarding the FDA's concerns with the increase in calls to Poison Control Centers, the Agency is citing a July 2016 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that states that there were less than thirty calls in 2010 and then 263 calls in 2015. To put this number in perspective, in 2014 alone, Poison Control Centers received over 4,000 calls regarding energy drink consumption and possible poisoning. Scientific research, expert testimony, and Poison Control Center data have shown that kratom is far less dangerous than energy drinks. The purpose of this information is not to encourage FDA to act on energy drinks, but rather to show by comparison that kratom is of less health risk than many popular consumer beverages.

Regarding the thirty-six deaths the FDA associates with kratom, the individuals died while taking prescription drugs and other substances in combination with kratom. This was of great concern to the State of Florida and was addressed by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Commissioner Rick Swearingen with the Office of Statewide Intelligence in 2015. Their investigation concluded that, "A review of available law enforcement and laboratory sources in Florida demonstrates that kratom does not currently constitute a significant risk to the safety and welfare of Florida residents. According to the Florida Department of Health (DOH), no pervasive health issues have been attributed to the ingestion of kratom products in Florida."

This subject has also forced independent studies by esteemed scientists like Jack Henningfield, PhD of Pinney & Associates, one the world's leading experts on addiction and safety. Regarding kratom, he states, "This is a remarkable record of safety and low abuse risk for any substance used by millions of Americans"

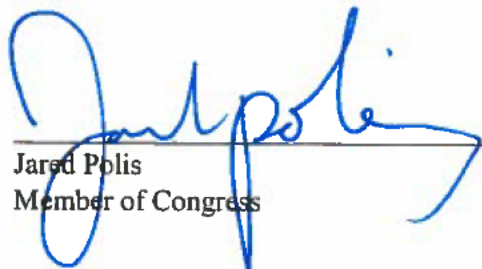
In recent years, most responsible manufacturers have properly labeled their products and have followed Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMP) guidelines, regulatory standards which were created by your agency. Because some states restrict sales to minors, most company labels reflect this. We believe that if legal access to professionally-manufactured kratom were made difficult or illegal, instances of kratom laced with opioids or other dangerous compounds would likely become more common.

Given that numerous stakeholders, former opioid addicts, and scientific researchers vouch for kratom's safety and support its use, and responsible manufacturers of kratom products ensure that their products are properly labeled for adult-only consumption, we respectfully request that the FDA reconsider its stance and take a closer look at the facts and recent science regarding this plant.

Sincerely,



Dave Brat
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



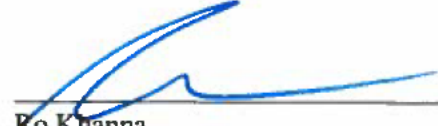
Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress



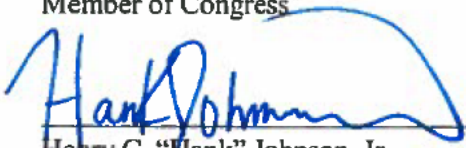
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Thomas Massie
Member of Congress



Paul Gosar
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



February 22, 2018

The Honorable Jack Bergman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2201

Dear Representative Bergman:

Thank you for your letter of December 20, 2017, cosigned by 16 of your colleagues, expressing your views regarding the safety, efficacy, and potential benefits of kratom, including its use as a potential treatment for opioid dependence.

Over the past several months, there have been many questions raised about kratom and the actions the Food and Drug Administration (FDA or the Agency) has taken in relation to this product. Our concerns about kratom are rooted in sound science, and the actions we have taken are in the interest of protecting public health. Recently, we have taken some significant steps to advance the scientific understanding of this product; how it works in the body; and its potential for abuse, addiction, and serious health consequences. We also have learned about more about deaths involving kratom use, and we have identified additional adverse events related to this product.

While FDA is aware of the interest in the use of kratom to treat a variety of conditions, there is no FDA-approved drug containing or derived from kratom, and there is no reliable evidence to support the use of kratom as a treatment for opioid use disorder. Currently, kratom cannot be legally marketed in the United States as a dietary supplement or a drug. We share your concerns about the dangers of opioid abuse and the need for additional effective treatments, and we recognize the need and desire for alternative treatments. FDA stands ready to evaluate evidence that could demonstrate a medicinal purpose for kratom. However, to date, we have received no such submissions and are not aware of any evidence that would meet the Agency's standard for approval.

Furthermore, kratom use is associated with significant potential safety concerns, as FDA reported in November 2017 when we warned about the product and noted 36 reports of death associated with kratom use. The Agency received these reports, along with reports of adverse events associated with kratom, in the FDA Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS¹) and the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's (CFSAN) Adverse Event Reporting System (CAERS²).

¹ <https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/Surveillance/AdverseDrugEffects/ucm070093.htm>.

² <https://www.fda.gov/Food/ComplianceEnforcement/ucm494015.htm>.

The Agency is continuing to receive reports of deaths associated with the use of kratom, and we are now aware of 44 reported deaths. Overall, many of the reported cases could not be fully assessed because of the limited information provided; however, one new report of death is of particular concern. Except for kratom use, the deceased individual had no historical or toxicologic evidence of opioid use. We are continuing to investigate this report, but the information we have so far reinforces our concerns about the use of kratom.

In addition, a few of the assessable cases with fatal outcomes raise concern about the use of kratom in combination with other drugs that affect the brain, including illicit drugs, prescription opioids, benzodiazepines, and over-the-counter medications like the anti-diarrheal medicine loperamide. However, unlike approved treatments, which have undergone extensive FDA review and on which the Agency continuously tracks safety data for emerging safety risks, there is no way for users to fully understand how products containing kratom interact with other drugs, how much should be taken, or even what is actually in the product being consumed.

Given the need to better understand kratom, we recently used a computational model developed by Agency scientists to conduct a novel scientific analysis, which provided even stronger evidence of kratom compounds' opioid properties. This new modeling showed that kratom compounds appear to affect the body just like opioids. This new data adds to our body of substantial scientific evidence supporting our concerns about the safety and abuse potential of kratom.

Additionally, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is currently evaluating two compounds in kratom and is considering whether and how they should be scheduled. FDA's scientific and medical analysis, called an "eight-factor analysis," is not typically released while the process of evaluation is still underway. FDA anticipates that when DEA makes its scheduling decision, the basis for its decision will be released.

Again, we remain open to potential therapeutic uses of kratom and note that FDA has a proven drug review process involving the evaluation of scientific research and patient experience in rigorous controlled clinical trials to assess the risks and benefits of drugs. Furthermore, FDA has a well-developed process for evaluating therapeutic uses of botanical drug products and is committed to facilitating development of botanical products that can help improve people's health. We have issued guidance on the proper development of botanical drug products and have a team of medical reviewers dedicated to the proper development of drug applications for botanicals. Ultimately, FDA is responsible for ensuring that the benefits of approved drug products have been demonstrated and outweigh their risks when used as directed in approved labeling.

We also note that there are several safe and effective, FDA-approved medical therapies available for the treatment of opioid addiction and safer, non-opioid options to treat pain. To aid appropriate product testing and development of new therapies with respect to substance use disorder, we are issuing guidance as well as taking other steps to enhance access to these products and add to our ability to effectively treat opioid addiction.

Once again, we appreciate your sharing your views and look forward to working with you to address this and other issues of concern. Please let us know if you have any further questions. The same letter has been sent to your cosigners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Gottlieb MD". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the letters "MD" written in a slightly larger, more distinct font at the end.

Scott Gottlieb, M.D.
Commissioner of Food and Drugs

From: [Russ, Wanda](#)
To: [Diallo, Mame K](#)
Subject: FW: Regarding Recent Kratom Discussion
Date: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 6:27:34 PM

CDER DDI D/R

From: Pennington, Caitlin
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 5:45 PM
To: Russ, Wanda <Wanda.Russ@fda.hhs.gov>
Subject: FW: Regarding Recent Kratom Discussion

From: (b) (6) [mailto:(b) (6)@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 3:10 PM
To: Commissioner FDA <CommissionerFDA@fda.hhs.gov>
Subject: Regarding Recent Kratom Discussion

Commissioner,

I am a daily Kratom user for chronic back pain. I use Kratom one or two times per day, 1 tsp per dose (or 2.5 grams). This is considered a light to normal dose. As someone who receives nearly no relief from acetaminophen or ibuprofen, I urge the FDA to reconsider their stance on Kratom. I just read an article stating that the FDA has seized and destroyed Kratom shipments at international mail centers. Considering that it is not illegal (as of yet, I know the rhetoric coming from all gov't officials is pushing for it), how is that even possible? I guess if those shipments were intended for one of the five states that have made it illegal, this is a sensible decision.

I know it is hard to accept the fact that so many people have found a helpful solution to chronic pain (and cheap, and not being profited from by big-pharma donators), but I find it in bad taste that you even think you have ground to stand upon that is not considered extreme bias. You have had donations from big pharma companies according to a simple google search. Even though in these articles you claim you will recuse yourself from these companies, any decision you make regarding drugs is a conflict of interest. Not just the drugs from companies that donated to you, but all drugs that would take a market share from them (ie: Kratom). Please consider this when you're evaluating any drug, especially one as safe, effective, and cheap as Kratom is.

If any of this information is incorrect due to media slant or just bad information, please feel free to correct me. I am only trying to preserve a substance's legality due to my massive relief from the drug.

Thanks for your time,

(b) (6)



TO: Acting Assistant Secretary for Health

FROM: Commissioner of Food and Drugs


DATE: October 12, 2017

SUBJECT: (b) (5) Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine (b) (6)
(b) (6)

(b) (5)

(b) (5)

(b) (5)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Gottlieb MD".

Scott Gottlieb, M.D.

Attachments